MARVEL MASTERWORKS

THE UNCANNY X-MEN

VOLUME 17

THE UNCANNY X-MEN Nos. 244-255
& ANNUAL No. 13
CHRIS CLAREMONT & MARC SILVESTRI

MARVEL MASTERWORKS

PRESENTS

THE UNCANNY X-MEN

VOLUME 17

COLLECTING

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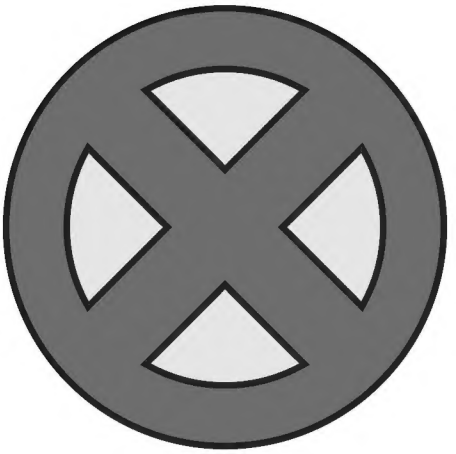
& ANNUAL No. 13

CHRIS CLAREMONT • MARC SILVESTRI



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NOS. 244-255 & ANNUAL NO. 13

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INTRODUCTION
BY CHRIS CLAREMONT

Marc Silvestri was and is—if you'll pardon the word—a *marvel!*

From my start on my initial run writing *The Uncanny X-Men*, *way* back in 1975, to its conclusion in 1991, the visual standards for the title were set by three artists: the man who basically founded this version of the series and created its core characters, Dave Cockrum; his successor, John Byrne; and the successor to them both, Paul Smith. The foundation they set, in terms of quality of work and sales, formed the creative and practical base for all that's followed since. Which, considering we're talking close to a half-century, is considerable. (*X-Men* #1 is after all the best-selling title in modern comics history.)

That said, it by no means lessens the contributions of those artists who followed in those footsteps, one of whom is the marvelous Marc Silvestri! He began his *Uncanny* run with Rogue, Dazzler, Psylocke and Longshot going up against Juggernaut, who also happened to be a big fan of Dazzler (the singer), even though he has ended up trying to kill her more than once. (Hey, it's comics—and X-canon comics—go figure!) Marc's first issue (#218) was exciting; it was glamourous; it was fun. And the heroes won. Twenty pages (more or less) later, and Marc's *Uncanny X-Men* run was on its way!

Our opening stories are more than a little bit down that road. In between then and now, our heroes have confronted Mr. Sinister and the Adversary, the extra-terrestrial Brood and the racist nation of Genosha. The clash with the Adversary led to the apparent sacrifice of the entire team. As we catch up with them here in this collection, the world believes they're all still dead. Thanks to the magic that created this situation, people's memories of any encounter with them is surprisingly fleeting. They might well remember the event, but the details, not so much. They can't describe either the team's looks, nor any details of their powers. In addition, the X-team can't be photographed, nor any electronic record of them be made. Essentially, in terms of any form of artificial recording device, these heroes don't exist. From a human perspective, they exist but are surprisingly—easily—forgotten. Except of course, as was established in our previous volume, by their mutant colleagues (X-Factor). The two teams know the realities of one another's existence—that the *Uncanny* team still lives and that the original band of X-Men are really X-Factor in disguise—but that's as far as things go at present. Sure, they might band together against a common foe, but that's only from time to time, to serve a greater good. Otherwise, as perhaps exemplified by the fact that they're based half-the-planet apart from one another (X-Factor in New York, the *Uncanny* team deep in the Australian Outback, literally the middle of a forgotten "Nowhere"), they remain as far from one another as it's possible to go.

And in this wilderness, what's our team doing?

Whole lots of stuff, actually, well worth reading:

The gals (Storm, Dazzler, Rogue and Psylocke), at Dazzler's urging, go shopping and run into not only a band of self-appointed mutant-hunters but an adolescent youngster (just 13) whose power allows her to manipulate light. She's an ABC (American-born Chinese) named Jubilee (short for Jubilation), whose parents immigrated from China in search of a fortune; and actually make one, only to die under mysterious circumstances when the authorities in Beijing learned of her existence. Jubilee's been on the run ever since, living in her favorite place on the planet, an L.A. super-mall.

CHRIS CLAREMONT JIM LEE DAN GI
WRITER PENCILER INKE

But that of course is just the beginning of her story. To find out what happens next—well, you have to read this book.

Our next story is the guys' turn. They (the Wolverine, Colossus, Longshot and Havok) hit the road themselves for a night on the town in Sydney, only to run into an extra-terrestrial invasion. And much fun is had by all!

Followed by the year's *X-Men Annual*, which for the first time in a decade is written by someone other than me. At least the primary story. The backup origin/backstory of Jubilee, presenting her introduction to the X-team's Ozzie-Outback home, is by me under a pseudonym but top-line writer (best known for his brilliant inking) Terry Austin is responsible for the primary tale here. Which is a story about the X-team coming up against some new and unforeseen antagonists, under surprisingly and unexpected circumstances. Fun to read, you betcha. And for one of the team, the answer to the age-old question: Do redheads *really* have more fun?

After which, Marc once more takes the artistic wheel as the team runs through issues of challenge and heartbreak, beginning with Rogue's visit to the Vietnam Veterans Memorial in Washington, DC, where she leaves her Medal of Honor beneath the name of her younger brother. Confused that Rogue was old enough to be in that war in the first place, much less that she had a brother? This issue is sort of a flashback to Rogue's introduction in *The Avengers Annual* #10, wherein she pretty much stole the memories—and more importantly, the personality—of Carol Danvers, who back in those days was a member of that super-hero team, as Ms. Marvel. Too young and uncomfortable with the use of her own abilities—especially against an opponent with Carol's strength of will—Rogue lost control of her powers. What was usually a *temporary* absorption of memories and powers became absolute and permanent. Rogue took everything from Carol and as a result must share her brain and her life with Carol Danvers. Neither likes the idea but as far as they're concerned, that's the way things are.

It also heralds Logan's departure from the team on a "secret" (as in personal) solo mission that won't bring him back to *Uncanny* for a number of issues.

The story told in *Uncanny* #246-247 puts the X-team up against one of their deadliest enemies, the Master Mold, the artificial intelligence responsible for creating the Sentinels. It's a fierce battle with casualties across the board and consequences that will impact the team well into its future.

Sadly, it seems like this is only the beginning of their heartbreak as their return to Oz puts the team up against a new opponent, Nanny and her assistant, the Orphan Maker. Readers may be used to seeing our heroes prevail against all manner of powerful adversaries, but in this case, in a single issue (#248), they not only barely carry the day but the price of that victory is one that strikes them to the core.

On the other hand, it also presents the arrival of Jim Lee as artist, even if for only, for now, a single issue. And what an introduction this is!

Next, while the remaining members of the team struggle to deal with (spoilers) a pair of heartfelt losses—not simply their leader, Storm, but with Longshot as well—they find themselves suddenly assaulted by a team of villains from the Savage Land. Having expended so much effort restoring that wondrous realm—one that had so much in common with the ancient Earth of eons past—the Savage Land was hoped to be a place wherein all its peoples could live together in peace; the X-team find themselves confronted with the brutal reality that things there may not have worked out the way they hoped.

REEN GLYNIS OLIVER, COLORIST
R TOM ORZECHOWSKI, LETTERER

From there, things go from very, very bad to altogether worse as the X-team is suddenly returned home by Gateway. What happens next? Well, read the next two stories "Fever Dream," chronicling what happens when Logan is crucified, for real, and "Where's Wolverine?!?"—namely, what happens next.

The final stories of this volume involve a very young girl named 'Ro who finds herself in the city of Cairo, Illinois—only the Cairo *she* remembers is Cairo, Egypt. There everyone speaks, of course, Egyptian (also Arabic); here, it seems, they speak English (which she also speaks, but with a Cairo accent.) The only constant to her memories is that in both "realities" she is being pursued by the Shadow King.

At the same time, on Muir Isle, between the farthest northern tip of Scotland and the Island chain known as the Hebrides, Moira MacTaggert's (mutant) research facility finds itself under assault by a segment of the Reavers who laid waste to the X-team's base in Australia. And here, too, while our heroes emerge triumphant, it is not without cost.

Throughout the majority of these stories, the artistic hand that binds them all together is Marc Silvestri's. Ask him to take our heroes anywhere, have them do anything, put them through moments of joy no matter how silly or through total and absolute heartbreak and he does so with an easy and graphic power that can take your breath away. Marc transforms "normal"-looking characters into gorgeous-looking underwater beings, such that readers (not to mention the author of the scene itself) can easily understand why Alysande Stuart emerges from the moment wondering if that transformation can happen again and by implication, if she'll ever want to change back. The more he gives readers, the more they want; the more they want, the absolute better he gives it to them.

I mean, think of the coolest Hollywood super-hero production *ever* and then factor in how much time and effort—not to mention, money—went into bringing it to reality. Imagine *all* the names you see stacked up in the end-credits listing the scores of folks responsible for bringing all that to life. (And we're talking a year-plus of work, easy! Hundreds of techs, at the very least. More $$$ than can be easily imagined. We're talking *lots*.)

In this neck of the woods, that's something Marc and I did month in, month out and sometimes even twice in 30 days. And what a wonderful ride it was! Like I said, he's among the very best.

That concludes the *X-Men* stories we have for you here, but not the treats that fill this volume—because this compendium also contains quite a few shorter stories, among them one of my very, very favorites: "Lone Wolvie and Chris." Derived from the classic samurai epic *Lone Wolf and Cub*, this (very, as in four pages long) short story presents Wolvie pushing a handcart through the most remote wilderness imaginable. Within the handcart, someone who looks remarkably like—well, me! From that point on, I'll let the story speak for itself. I love it and have done so for quite a while. I'll bet you will too.

But that's just one of many shorts presented herein, starting off with a *Classic X-Men* piece by Ann Nocenti and Jim Lee, two creators who have more than a little familiarity with the X-canon. Simply put: A young mutant reaches out to Storm, hoping to make friends. She misunderstands, brushes him off, returns to the X-mansion to meet up with Colossus and Wolverine. He follows and all four of them face the consequences of her casual reaction to a New York Midtown moment. Ann and Jim explore how meeting someone resembling Tony Stark can provoke one response, while meeting a street kid can provoke another and the consequences thereof. How even Storm, leader of the X-team, can make a mistake.

That's the downside of simple misunderstandings when one's dealing with people who possess super-powers. These aren't icons; they're people, who make mistakes. Only, when a mutant possessing active powers loses their temper, the consequences can be both consequential and tragic.

The next story, by Peter Gillis (writer) and Jon Bogdanove and Al Milgrom (artists), is both visually silly and a whole lot of fun, the kind of tale that is far-too-rarely told these days. Barely a half-dozen pages, jammed full of more characters than can be imagined, it's a slug-fest to the max (in other words, ridiculous beyond compare) with more laughs than characters (which is saying *quite* a lot!). Dare to read it without cracking at least *one* smile, plus—oh-what-the-heck—a chuckle, if not an outright laugh. Worked for me.

Sadly, Peter passed recently, which means we'll never have such stories from him again. But this will give you readers a taste of what he did and why his work, start-to-finish, was well worth reading.

Interestingly, Al Milgrom, like far too many artists, is not only a top-of-the-line penciler and inker, he's also an accomplished writer to boot. As his story here—with art provided by penciler Mike Mignola and inker Al Williamson—proves. Again, more humor, poking fun at just about every story and character arc presented in the X-canon at that time.

There's a whole lot more presented here, by writers and artists whose reputations speak for themselves, culled from various points throughout the early days of their various careers. In fact, way more than be easily mentioned here. Which, I guess, means you'll have to find them the old-fashioned way, by turning one page at a time and enjoying what you see along that way.

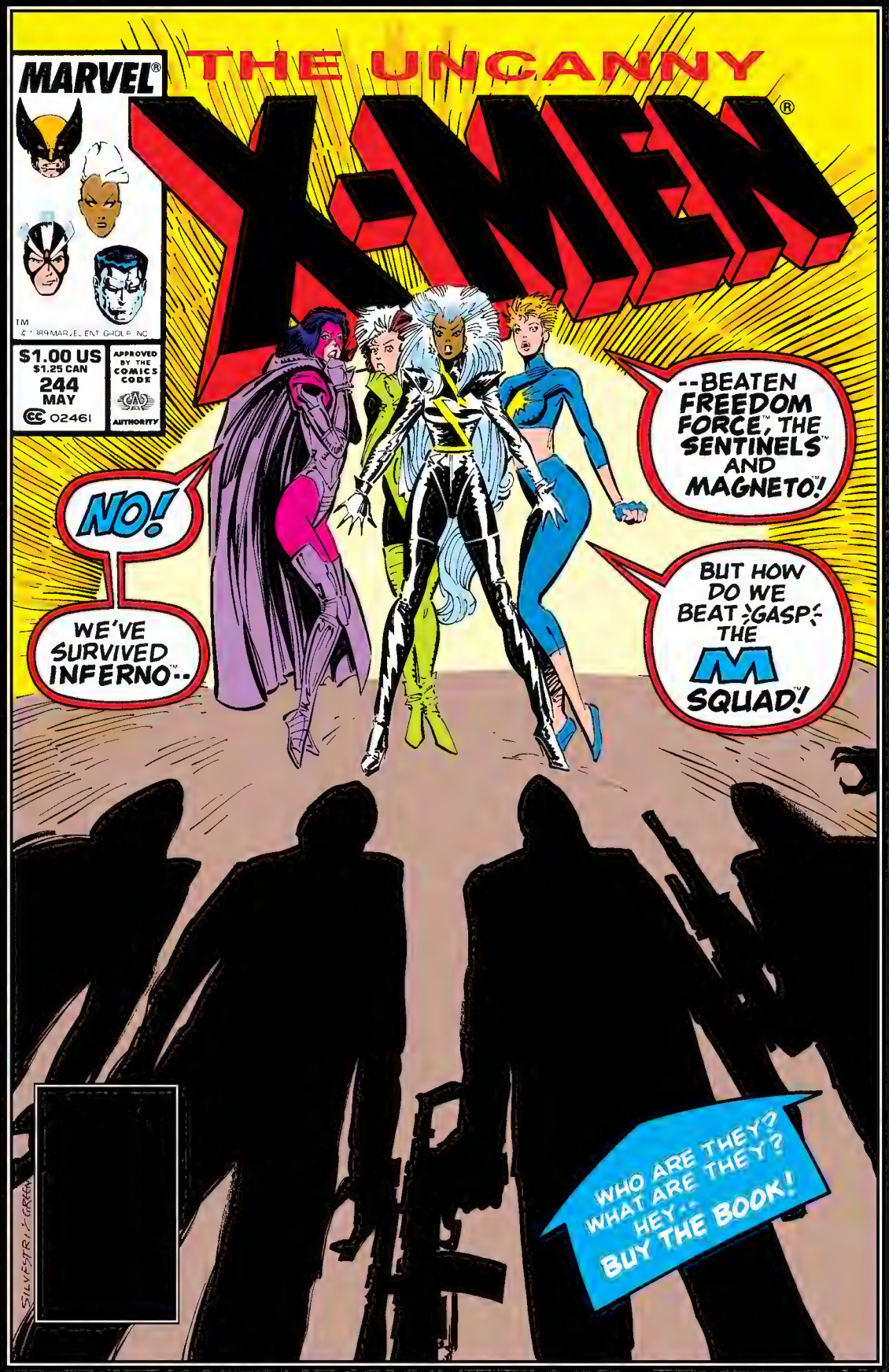
Sure worked for me.

That's what reading—and writing, because all these stories had to start somewhere—is all about. Creators put their ideas down on paper, as words and then pictures, with lettering and coloring added along the way, always with the hope that you readers will embrace them and hope for more.

That way, everyone goes home happy.

Hope you're one of them!

2024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THE UNCANNY
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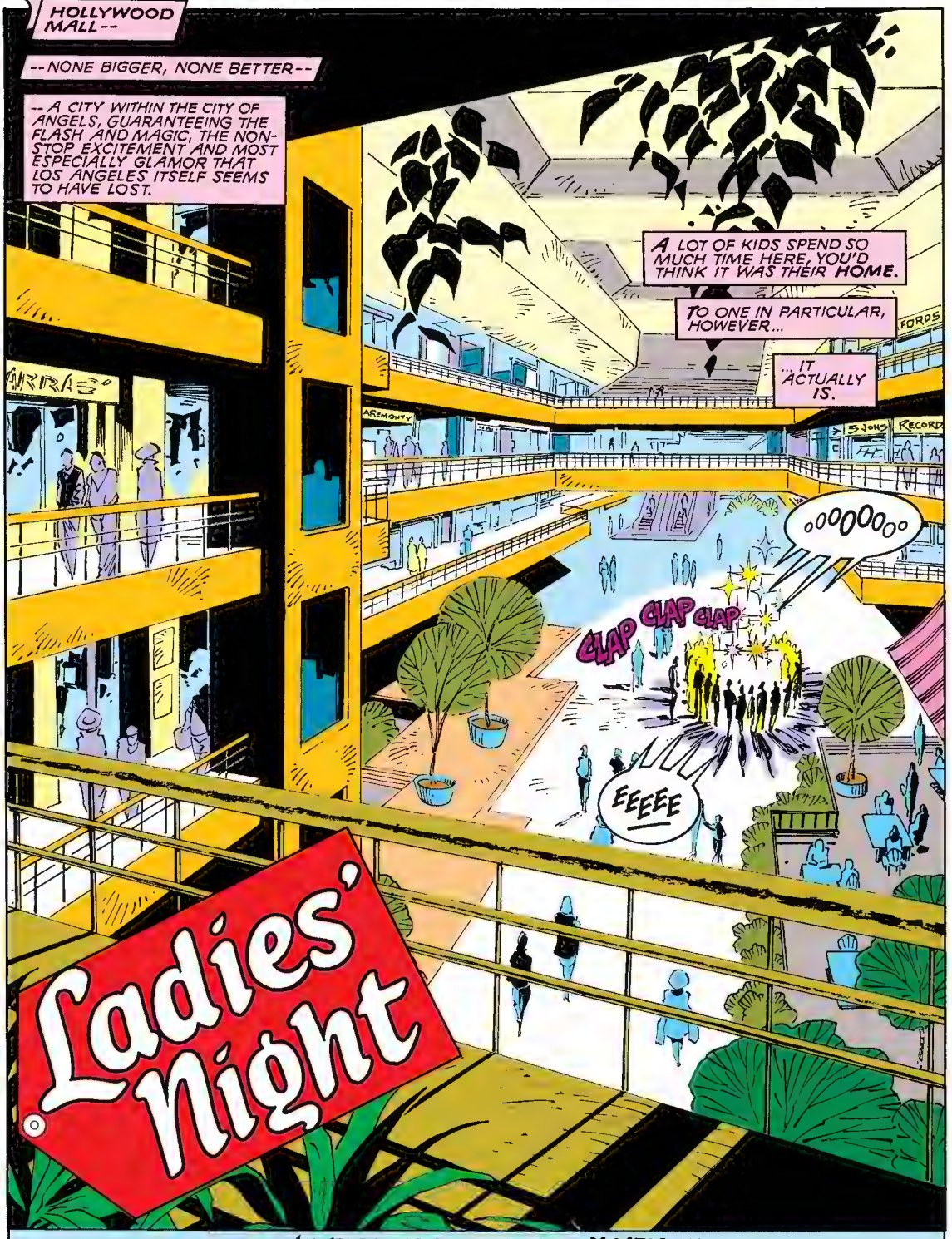
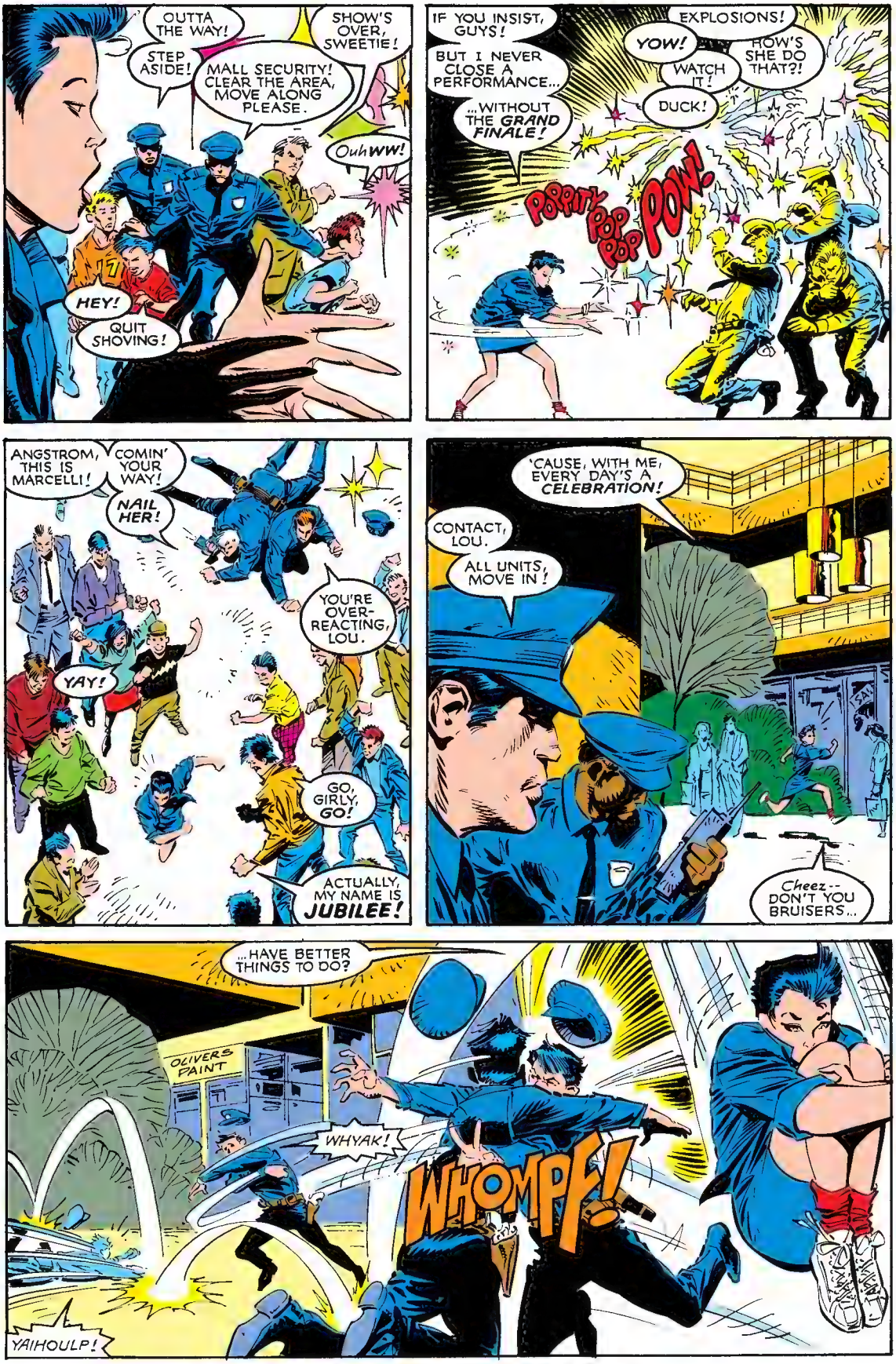
244
MAY
02461
APPROVED BY THE COMICS CODE
AUTHORITY
NO!
WE'VE SURVIVED INFERNO--
--BEATEN FREEDOM FORCE™, THE SENTINELS™ AND MAGNETO™!
BUT HOW DO WE BEAT :GASP: THE M SQUAD™!
WHO ARE THEY? WHAT ARE THEY? HEY-- BUY THE BOOK!
SILVESTRI / GREEN


HOLLYWOOD MALL--
--NONE BIGGER, NONE BETTER--
--A CITY WITHIN THE CITY OF ANGELS, GUARANTEEING THE FLASH AND MAGIC, THE NON-STOP EXCITEMENT AND MOST ESPECIALLY GLAMOR THAT LOS ANGELES ITSELF SEEMS TO HAVE LOST.
A LOT OF KIDS SPEND SO MUCH TIME HERE, YOU'D THINK IT WAS THEIR HOME.
TO ONE IN PARTICULAR, HOWEVER...
...IT ACTUALLY IS.
FORDS
ARRAS
ARMONY
S JONS
RECORD
OOOOOOO
CLAP CLAP CLAP
EEEEE
Ladies' Night

AN ADVENTURE OF THE UNCANNY **X-MEN** BY

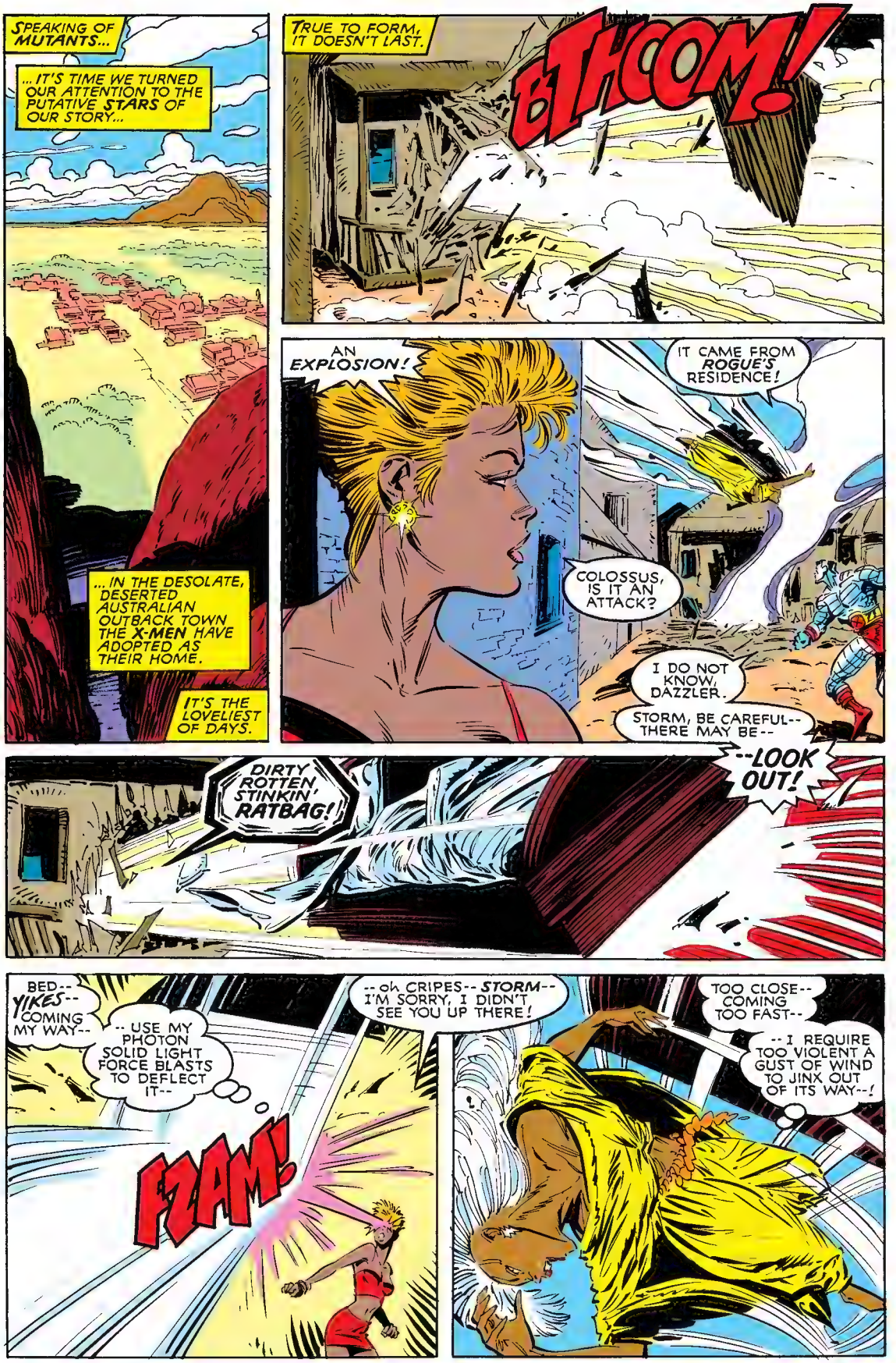
CHRIS CLAREMONT	MARC SILVESTRI	DAN GREEN	GLYNIS OLIVER	TOM ORZECHOWSKI	BOB HARRAS	TOM DeFALCO
WRITER	*PENCILER*	*INKER*	*COLORIST*	*LETTERER*	*EDITOR*	*MALL MANAGER*

THOSE BALLS OF LIGHT...
...THEY'RE COMING RIGHT OUT OF HER HAND!
IT MUST BE A TRICK. AN OPTICAL ILLUSION!
BET SHE'S A MUTIE!
WHO CARES, BARF-BUTT!
SHE'S NEAT!
Zippity-doo-dah-diddy-wop-bop-a-loo-bob-a-wop-bam-boo!
CLAP CLAP
CLAP CLAP CLAP
THE OLD DAYS, WE MAGIC FOLK USED TO SAY, "ABRA-KADABRA."
BUT Y'ASK ME...
...LITTLE RICHARD'S WORDS SPARKLE BETTER!
IN CASE ANYONE'S CURIOUS, WHAT WE HAVE HERE...
...ARE ARTICULATE, QUASI-ANIMATE, TRANSITORY PLASMOIDS.
PIECES OF RAW ENERGY...
...THAT COME WHEN I CALL...
...DO WHAT I TELL 'EM...
...AN' TAKE A HIKE ON SKIDOO-CUE.
THEY'RE LIKE FIREWORKS!
THERE!
SHE'S AT IT AGAIN!
LOU, SHE'S JUST A KID.
SHE AIN'T DOIN' NO HARM.
WHADDYA WANNA GO MAKIN' A FEDERAL CASE OUTTA THIS.
SHE'S BREAKIN' THE RULES, BILLY.
STUCK-UP LITTLE BRAT...
...ACTS LIKE SHE OWNS THE PLACE.
SEE HOW LOUD SHE LAUGHS...
...WHEN WE TOSS HER IN COUNTY JUVENILE!
I WANT EVERY MAN ON HER CASE-- NOW!


OUTTA THE WAY!
STEP ASIDE!
MALL SECURITY! CLEAR THE AREA, MOVE ALONG PLEASE.
SHOW'S OVER, SWEETIE!
OuhWW!
HEY!
QUIT SHOVING!
IF YOU INSIST, GUYS!
BUT I NEVER CLOSE A PERFORMANCE...
...WITHOUT THE GRAND FINALE!
EXPLOSIONS!
YOW!
WATCH IT!
HOW'S SHE DO THAT?!
DUCK!
POPPITY POP POP POP POW!
ANGSTROM, THIS IS MARCELLI!
COMIN' YOUR WAY!
NAIL HER!
YOU'RE OVER-REACTING, LOU.
YAY!
GO, GIRLY, GO!
ACTUALLY, MY NAME IS JUBILEE!
'CAUSE, WITH ME, EVERY DAY'S A CELEBRATION!
CONTACT, LOU.
ALL UNITS, MOVE IN!
Cheez-- DON'T YOU BRUISERS...
...HAVE BETTER THINGS TO DO?
OLIVERS PAINT
WHYAK!
WHOMPF!
YAIHOULP!

HEAD HER OFF AT THE ESCALATORS!
DON'T TEMPT ME, SULLIVAN!
WHY DON'T YOU JUST SHOOT HER, LOU?
STOP!
STOP!
STOP!
STOP!
STOP!
STOP!
JUBILEE!
FAST MOVER.
FOR SOMEONE WITH NO WHEELS.
GIVIN' THE HUFF-'N'-PUFF RENTAL BADGES A RUN.
DON'T LIKE THE ODDS.
EVEN 'EM, MAYBE?
RADICAL!
LET'S ROLL!
YOW!
BASH!
THUMP
EXCUSE ME.
PARDON ME.
COMING THROUGH.
IN A RUSH.
Awhh cheese--
--DON'T YOU GUYS EVER QUIT?
GO STOP A REAL CRIME, WHY DON'T'CHA?
A FIT PLACE FOR DECENT FOLK.
WE GOT NO ROOM FOR STREET TRASH RUNAWAY RIFF-RAFF.
NO FAIR ALWAYS PICKIN' ON ME!
THIS IS OUR TURF, GIRLY.
WELL EXCUSE ME ALL TO BLAZES!
LOU, SHE'S THROWIN' THEM SPARKLIES!

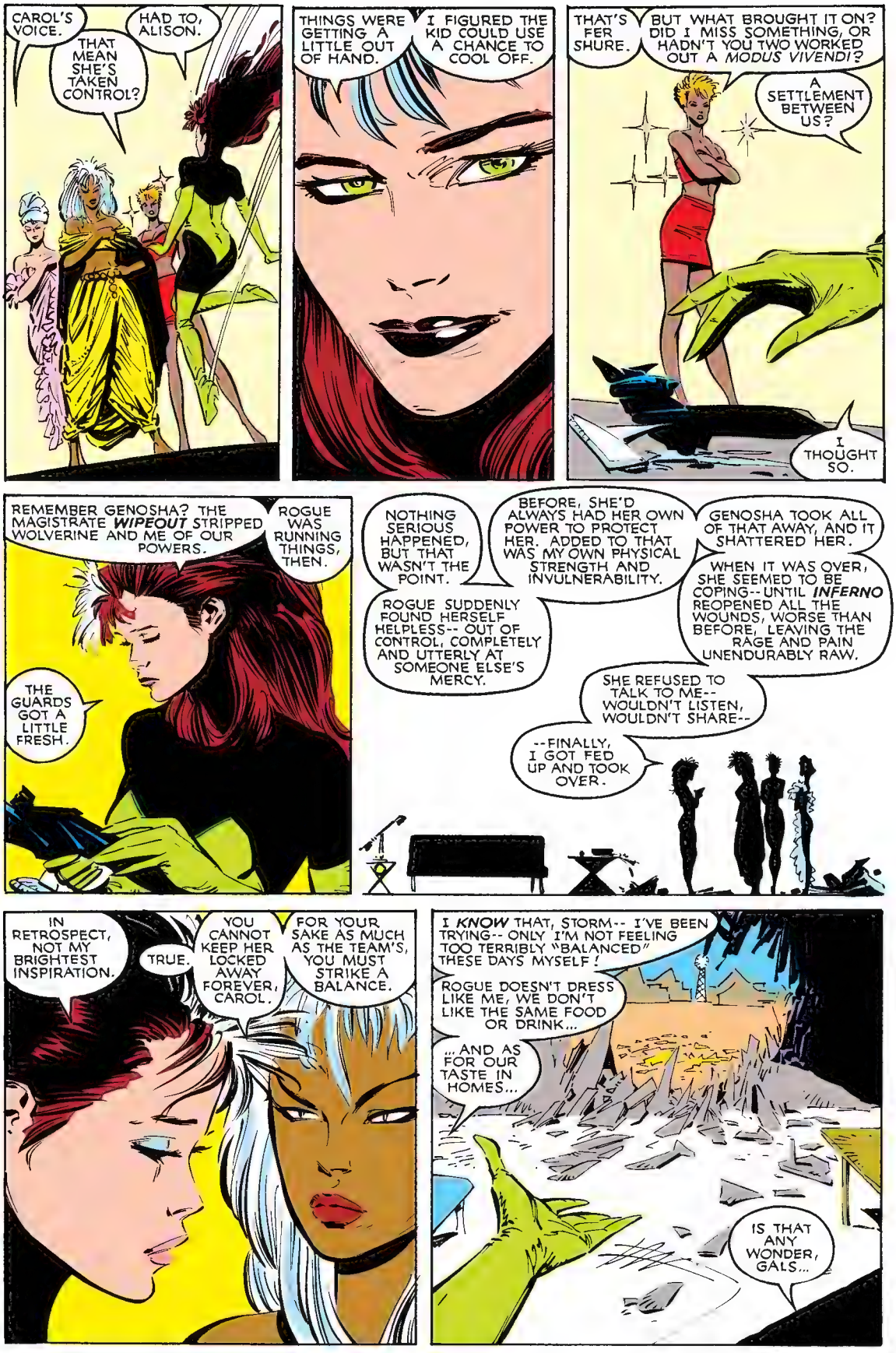
CALLING ME "RIFF-RAFF"--
--THE NERVE!
POP
POP
POP
POP
I CAN'T SEE-- BLASTED FIRECRACKERS-- WHERE'D SHE GO?!
I'LL HAVE YOU KNOW...
... I ATTENDED BEVERLY HILLS PREP!
SHE JUMPED!
IT'S FIFTY FEET TO THE MAIN FLOOR!
GOOD RIDDANCE!
AND I WAS AN ABSOLUTELY ACES GYMNAST!
WHEEEEEEEEEE
IS THIS FLASH, IS THIS STYLE, IS THIS GRACE-- OR WHAT?!
WHAT?
PHILISTINE!
HERE COME THE JUDGES' SCORES-- 9.8, 9.9, A PERFECT 10, 9.3, 9.8, AND FROM THE RUSSIANS, 3.7.
BUT THE CROWD ROARS, THEY DON'T CARE, THEY LOVE HER ANYWAY!
BETTER LUCK NEXT TIME, GUYS!
BE SEEING YOU!
I HATE HER I HATE HER I HATE HER!
YO, CHIEF, TAKE A GANDER AT THIS.
IF THIS KID'S REALLY A MUTIE, FACE FACTS, LOU, SHE'S WAY OUT OF OUR LEAGUE.
WE NEED TRAINED PROFESSIONALS.
M SQUAD
MUTANT HUNTERS EXTRAORDINAIRE
WHY PAY MORE? SAVE $$
CALL NOW AND GET A STRAY TOASTER FREE!
CALL TOLL FREE 1-800-555-HUNT 1-800-555-MUTE
CALL 'EM!

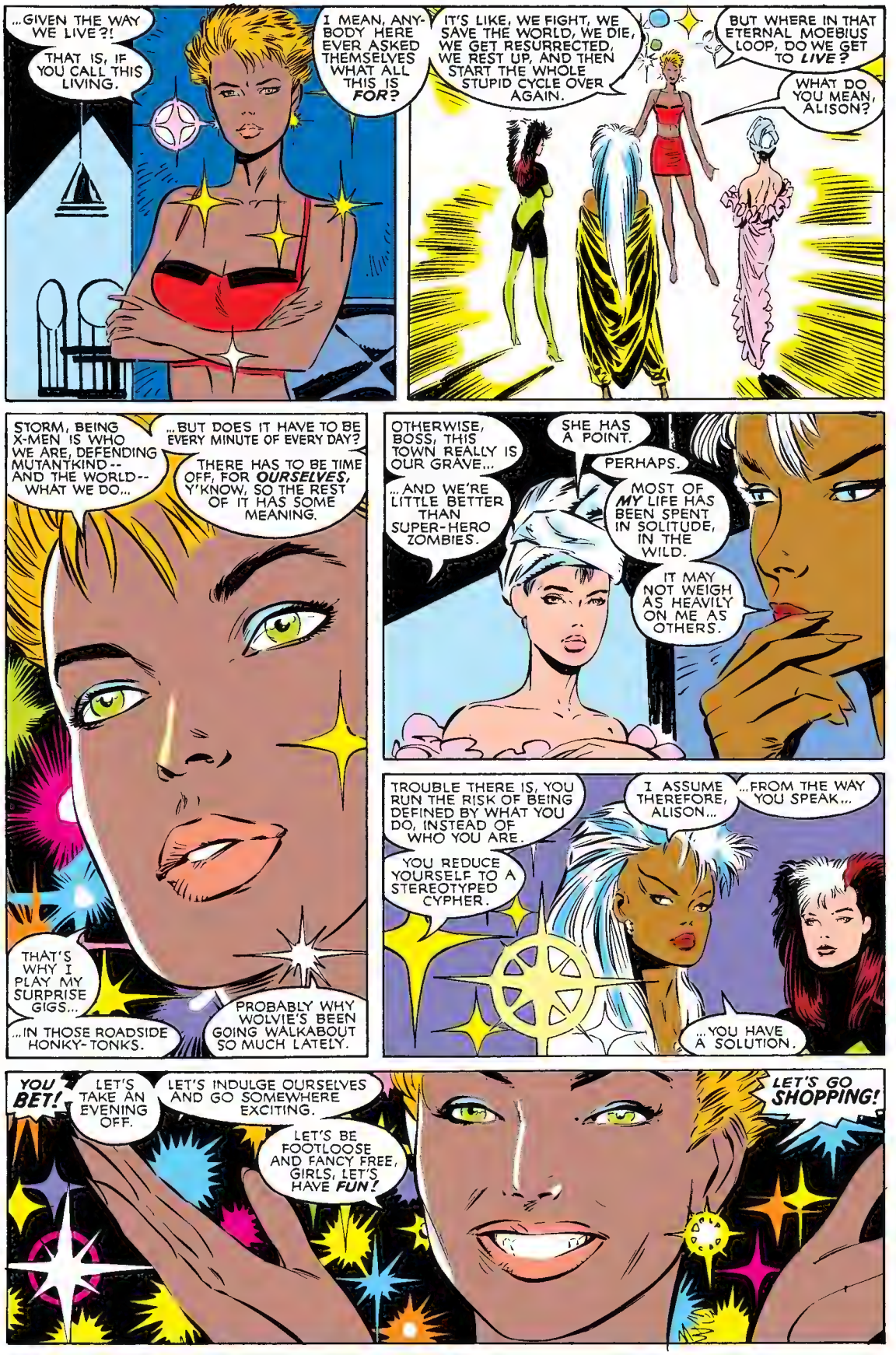

SPEAKING OF MUTANTS...
...IT'S TIME WE TURNED OUR ATTENTION TO THE PUTATIVE STARS OF OUR STORY...
...IN THE DESOLATE, DESERTED AUSTRALIAN OUTBACK TOWN THE X-MEN HAVE ADOPTED AS THEIR HOME.
IT'S THE LOVELIEST OF DAYS.
TRUE TO FORM, IT DOESN'T LAST.
BTHOOM!
AN EXPLOSION!
IT CAME FROM ROGUE'S RESIDENCE!
COLOSSUS, IS IT AN ATTACK?
I DO NOT KNOW, DAZZLER.
STORM, BE CAREFUL-- THERE MAY BE--
--LOOK OUT!
DIRTY ROTTEN, STINKIN' RATBAG!
BED-- YIKES-- COMING MY WAY--
-- USE MY PHOTON SOLID LIGHT FORCE BLASTS TO DEFLECT IT--
FZAM!
-- oh CRIPES-- STORM-- I'M SORRY, I DIDN'T SEE YOU UP THERE!
TOO CLOSE-- COMING TOO FAST--
-- I REQUIRE TOO VIOLENT A GUST OF WIND TO JINX OUT OF ITS WAY--!

I DODGED--
--IT MISSED ME--
--BUT I HAVE NO ROOM TO MANEUVER--
--NO CHANCE TO REGAIN CONTROL OF WINDS OR SELF BEFORE I--!
CRASH!
?
SPLASH!
Ahem!
BETSY, I...
...I...
FLIKT!

ROGUE IS THROWING A TANTRUM!
ALONG WITH EVERY STICK OF FURNITURE IN THE PLACE!
WHAT GIVES?!
I THOUGHT IT WAS LOVELY.
SKBKOW!
ROGUE!
STORM, YOU ARE DRENCHED!
LATER.
NO HARD FEELINGS, BOSS?
LATER!
ENOUGH IS ENOUGH, YOUNG WOMAN!
WHAT IS THE MEANING OF THIS OUTBURST?!
IT'S HER, STORM, DON'T'CHA SEE?!
Awh GOLLY-GOSH, DON'T ANY OF Y'ALL UNDERSTAND?!!
SHE MEANS CAROL DANVERS.
DARN STRAIGHT!
LOOK AROUND.
--WITHOUT EVEN SO MUCH AS A BY-YOUR-LEAVE!
THIS IS S'POSED T' BE MY PLACE-- SEE WHAT SHE DONE TO IT?!
THAT YANKEE WITCH TOOK CONTROL O' MY BODY AN' REDECORATED MY HOME--

PSYLOCKE--YOU'RE A TELEPATH!
YOU CAN WIPE DANVERS OUTTA MY HEAD!
DOUBTFUL, GIVEN THE UNIQUE NATURE OF CAROL'S OWN PSYCHE.
I CAN HARDLY READ YOUR THOUGHTS, ROGUE, MUCH LESS ERASE THEM.
EVEN IF IT WERE POSSIBLE, IT WOULD NOT BE RIGHT.
SHOULD'A FIGURED YOU'D SIDE WITH HER.
YOU ALL LIKE HER BETTER! IF YOU HAD YOUR DRUTHERS, I BET IT'S ME YOU'D GET RID OF!
STOP IT, CHILD! IT WAS YOUR DECISION TO ATTACK CAROL, YOUR POWER THAT ABSORBED HER PSYCHE INTO YOURS.
BUT THAT WAS AN ACCIDENT!
AH NEVER MEANT IT TO BE PERMANENT.
BE THAT AS IT MAY...
...THAT IS WHAT HAPPENED.
FOR BETTER OR WORSE...
...FOR THE REST OF YOUR LIVES...
... YOU ARE STUCK WITH EACH OTHER.
AND IF THAT PROVES AN "INCONVENIENCE," THEN CONSIDER IT FAIR PUNISHMENT FOR A CRIME THAT WAS ITSELF THE NEXT BEST THING TO MURDER.
AT LAST AT LAST THE TRUTH COMES OUT!
YOU'VE NEVER FORGIVEN ME FOR THAT, HAVE YOU?!
ALL THE TIME AH'VE FOUGHT B'SIDE YOU HASN'T MADE A WHIT O' DIFFERENCE!
AH'M STILL THE RENEGADE, RUNAWAY BAD GIRL...
... FROM THE BROTHERHOOD OF EVIL MUTANTS...
... WHO YOU WERE FORCED TO ACCEPT AS A TEAM-MATE!
WELL IF THAT'S THE CASE, Y'ALL DON'T HAVE TO WORRY ABOUT ME NO MORE...
...'CAUSE NO WAY DO I STAY WHERE AH'M NOT WANTED!
ROGUE!
SORRY ABOUT THAT.


CAROL'S VOICE.
THAT MEAN SHE'S TAKEN CONTROL?
HAD TO, ALISON.
THINGS WERE GETTING A LITTLE OUT OF HAND.
I FIGURED THE KID COULD USE A CHANCE TO COOL OFF.
THAT'S FER SHURE.
BUT WHAT BROUGHT IT ON? DID I MISS SOMETHING, OR HADN'T YOU TWO WORKED OUT A *MODUS VIVENDI*?
A SETTLEMENT BETWEEN US?
I THOUGHT SO.
REMEMBER GENOSHA? THE MAGISTRATE ***WIPEOUT*** STRIPPED WOLVERINE AND ME OF OUR POWERS.
ROGUE WAS RUNNING THINGS, THEN.
THE GUARDS GOT A LITTLE FRESH.
NOTHING SERIOUS HAPPENED, BUT THAT WASN'T THE POINT.
BEFORE, SHE'D ALWAYS HAD HER OWN POWER TO PROTECT HER. ADDED TO THAT WAS MY OWN PHYSICAL STRENGTH AND INVULNERABILITY.
GENOSHA TOOK ALL OF THAT AWAY, AND IT SHATTERED HER.
WHEN IT WAS OVER, SHE SEEMED TO BE COPING--UNTIL ***INFERNO*** REOPENED ALL THE WOUNDS, WORSE THAN BEFORE, LEAVING THE RAGE AND PAIN UNENDURABLY RAW.
ROGUE SUDDENLY FOUND HERSELF HELPLESS-- OUT OF CONTROL, COMPLETELY AND UTTERLY AT SOMEONE ELSE'S MERCY.
SHE REFUSED TO TALK TO ME-- WOULDN'T LISTEN, WOULDN'T SHARE--
--FINALLY, I GOT FED UP AND TOOK OVER.
IN RETROSPECT, NOT MY BRIGHTEST INSPIRATION.
TRUE.
YOU CANNOT KEEP HER LOCKED AWAY FOREVER, CAROL.
FOR YOUR SAKE AS MUCH AS THE TEAM'S, YOU MUST STRIKE A BALANCE.
I ***KNOW*** THAT, STORM-- I'VE BEEN TRYING-- ONLY I'M NOT FEELING TOO TERRIBLY "BALANCED" THESE DAYS MYSELF!
ROGUE DOESN'T DRESS LIKE ME, WE DON'T LIKE THE SAME FOOD OR DRINK...
... AND AS FOR OUR TASTE IN HOMES...
IS THAT ANY WONDER, GALS...


...GIVEN THE WAY WE LIVE?!
THAT IS, IF YOU CALL THIS LIVING.
I MEAN, ANYBODY HERE EVER ASKED THEMSELVES WHAT ALL THIS IS FOR?
IT'S LIKE, WE FIGHT, WE SAVE THE WORLD, WE DIE, WE GET RESURRECTED, WE REST UP, AND THEN START THE WHOLE STUPID CYCLE OVER AGAIN.
BUT WHERE IN THAT ETERNAL MOEBIUS LOOP, DO WE GET TO LIVE?
WHAT DO YOU MEAN, ALISON?
STORM, BEING X-MEN IS WHO WE ARE, DEFENDING MUTANTKIND -- AND THE WORLD -- WHAT WE DO...
...BUT DOES IT HAVE TO BE EVERY MINUTE OF EVERY DAY?
THERE HAS TO BE TIME OFF, FOR OURSELVES, Y'KNOW, SO THE REST OF IT HAS SOME MEANING.
THAT'S WHY I PLAY MY SURPRISE GIGS...
...IN THOSE ROADSIDE HONKY-TONKS.
PROBABLY WHY WOLVIE'S BEEN GOING WALKABOUT SO MUCH LATELY.
OTHERWISE, BOSS, THIS TOWN REALLY IS OUR GRAVE...
...AND WE'RE LITTLE BETTER THAN SUPER-HERO ZOMBIES.
SHE HAS A POINT.
PERHAPS.
MOST OF MY LIFE HAS BEEN SPENT IN SOLITUDE, IN THE WILD.
IT MAY NOT WEIGH AS HEAVILY ON ME AS OTHERS.
TROUBLE THERE IS, YOU RUN THE RISK OF BEING DEFINED BY WHAT YOU DO, INSTEAD OF WHO YOU ARE.
YOU REDUCE YOURSELF TO A STEREOTYPED CYPHER.
I ASSUME THEREFORE, ALISON...
...FROM THE WAY YOU SPEAK...
...YOU HAVE A SOLUTION.
YOU BET!
LET'S TAKE AN EVENING OFF.
LET'S INDULGE OURSELVES AND GO SOMEWHERE EXCITING.
LET'S BE FOOTLOOSE AND FANCY FREE, GIRLS, LET'S HAVE FUN!
LET'S GO SHOPPING!

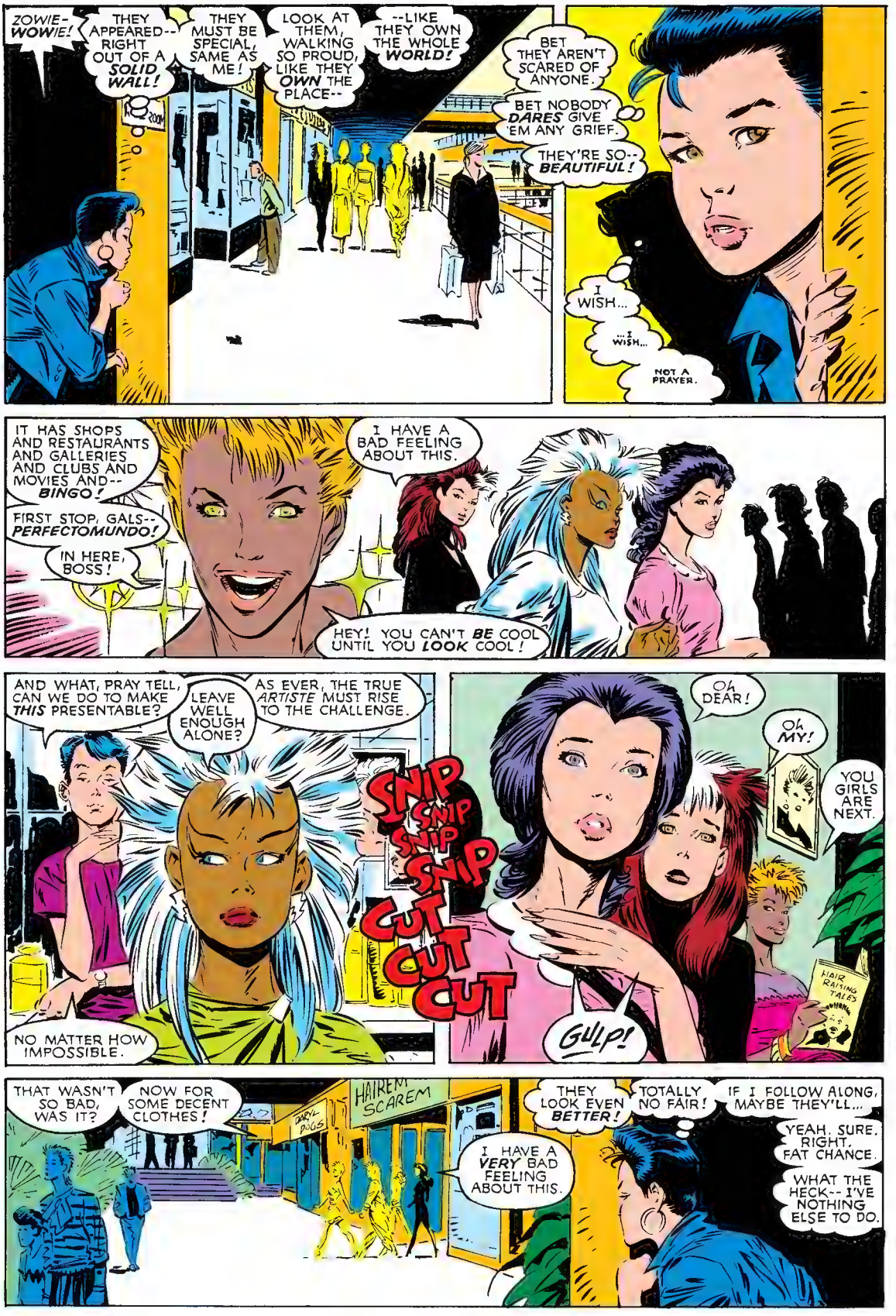
AND SO...
...BACK WHERE THIS ALL BEGAN...
Hollywood MALL
HERE THEY COME!

GEEZ, TRUCK PLAYS THEIR THEME SONG AN' EVERY-THING!
RADICAL HARDWARE, MAN!
STATE-OF-THE-ART STAR WARS!
SCREEEECH!
YOW!

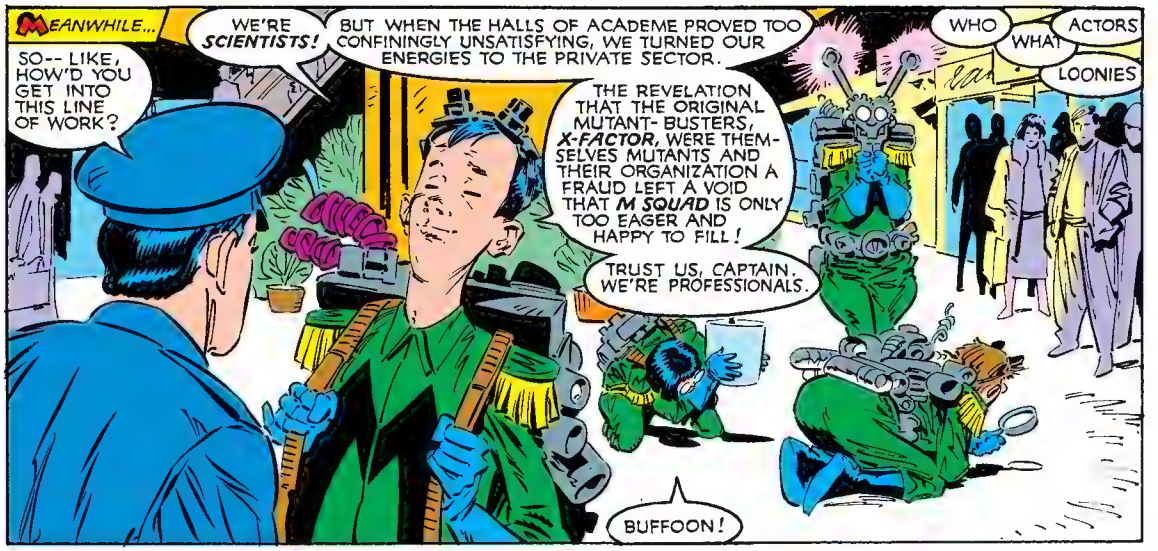
HAVE NO FEAR, CITIZENS--
--M SQUAD IS HERE!
I HAVE A NICE DAY MUTIE!
THAT IS SO CORNY, DOCTOR.
THIS IS LOS ANGELES, "DOCTOR."
THINGS HERE MUST BE DONE WITH STYLE!
MY PANTS ARE TOO TIGHT.

MEANWHILE...
...ACROSS THE MALL.
IS GATEWAY A MARVEL OR WHAT--
--HE TELEPORTED US TO THE HOLLYWOOD MALL!
ALISON, WHAT HAS SHOPPING TO DO WITH A GOOD TIME?
NOT TO MENTION A PLACE LIKE THIS.
WHY, STORM-- EVERYTHING!

I BELIEVE THERE ARE TOWNS IN ENGLAND SMALLER THAN THIS.
ISN'T IT GREAT?!
ALL STEEL AND GLASS, SEALED OFF FROM THE SKY.
A MALL, LIKE ANY OTHER, ONLY MORESO.
THAT, MS. DANVERS, IS WHAT YOU THINK!

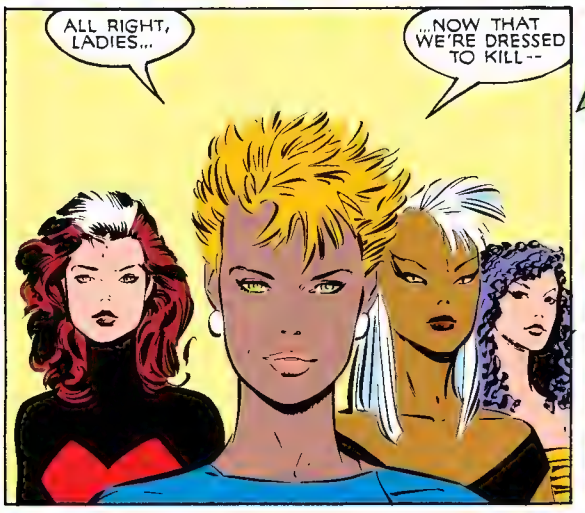

ZOWIE-WOWIE!
THEY APPEARED--RIGHT OUT OF A SOLID WALL!
THEY MUST BE SPECIAL, SAME AS ME!
LOOK AT THEM, WALKING SO PROUD, LIKE THEY OWN THE PLACE--
--LIKE THEY OWN THE WHOLE WORLD!
BET THEY AREN'T SCARED OF ANYONE.
BET NOBODY DARES GIVE 'EM ANY GRIEF.
THEY'RE SO--BEAUTIFUL!
I WISH...
...I WISH...
NOT A PRAYER.
IT HAS SHOPS AND RESTAURANTS AND GALLERIES AND CLUBS AND MOVIES AND--BINGO!
FIRST STOP, GALS--PERFECTOMUNDO!
IN HERE, BOSS!
I HAVE A BAD FEELING ABOUT THIS.
HEY! YOU CAN'T BE COOL UNTIL YOU LOOK COOL!
AND WHAT, PRAY TELL, CAN WE DO TO MAKE THIS PRESENTABLE?
LEAVE WELL ENOUGH ALONE?
AS EVER, THE TRUE ARTISTE MUST RISE TO THE CHALLENGE.
SNIP SNIP SNIP SNIP
CUT CUT CUT
NO MATTER HOW IMPOSSIBLE.
OH DEAR!
OH MY!
YOU GIRLS ARE NEXT.
HAIR RAISING TALES
GULP!
THAT WASN'T SO BAD, WAS IT?
NOW FOR SOME DECENT CLOTHES!
HAIREM SCAREM
DARYL DOGS
I HAVE A VERY BAD FEELING ABOUT THIS.
THEY LOOK EVEN BETTER!
TOTALLY NO FAIR!
IF I FOLLOW ALONG, MAYBE THEY'LL...
YEAH. SURE. RIGHT. FAT CHANCE.
WHAT THE HECK-- I'VE NOTHING ELSE TO DO.

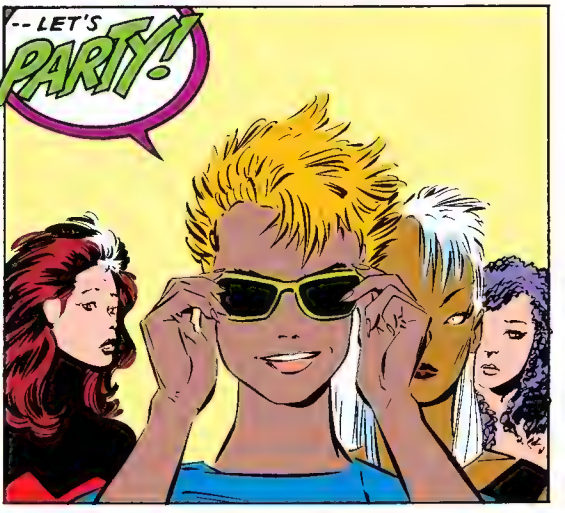
TA-DAAA!
SALE
AM I A STAR, OR WHAT?
CERTAINLY GLOW LIKE ONE, LIGHTENGALE.
TO EACH THEIR OWN, ALISON.
I WOULDN'T LAUGH, STORM.
50% SALE
I SUSPECT SHE HAS WORSE IN STORE FOR US.
WHY MUST I PAINT MY FACE?
TO LOOK GOOD.
WHY?
SO PEOPLE'LL LOOK AT YOU.
THEY ALREADY DO. TOO OFTEN. I DO NOT LIKE IT.
STOP BEING SO SERIOUS, STORM.
THIS IS PLAY!
IF ROGUE DOESN'T SLAUGHTER ME FOR THE HAIRCUT...
...SHE'S SURE TO FOR THE DRESS.
ALISON, WHERE IS THE SENSE IN WEARING HEELS SO HIGH...
...THEY NEARLY BREAK YOUR ANKLES?
HOPELESS, BETSY, UTTERLY HOPELESS.
WHY ME, oh LORD?
SO BEAUTIFUL...
...SO CRAZY.
ELIZABETH BRADDOCK-- HOW RUDE!
WE'RE PROUD OF YOU, GIRL!

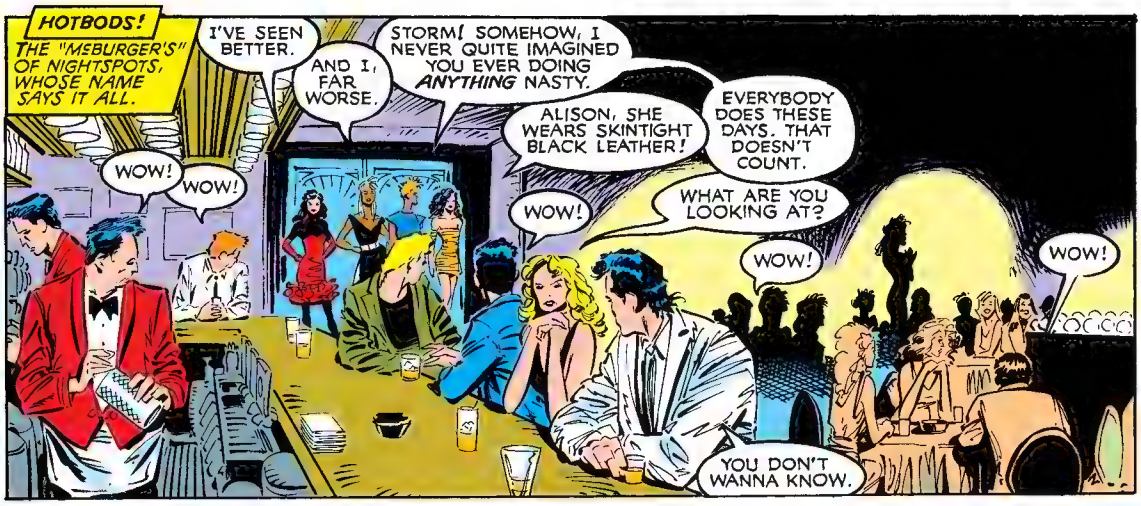

MEANWHILE...
SO-- LIKE, HOW'D YOU GET INTO THIS LINE OF WORK?
WE'RE SCIENTISTS!
BUT WHEN THE HALLS OF ACADEME PROVED TOO CONFININGLY UNSATISFYING, WE TURNED OUR ENERGIES TO THE PRIVATE SECTOR.
THE REVELATION THAT THE ORIGINAL MUTANT- BUSTERS, X-FACTOR, WERE THEMSELVES MUTANTS AND THEIR ORGANIZATION A FRAUD LEFT A VOID THAT M SQUAD IS ONLY TOO EAGER AND HAPPY TO FILL!
TRUST US, CAPTAIN. WE'RE PROFESSIONALS.
BUFFOON!
WHO
WHAT
ACTORS
LOONIES

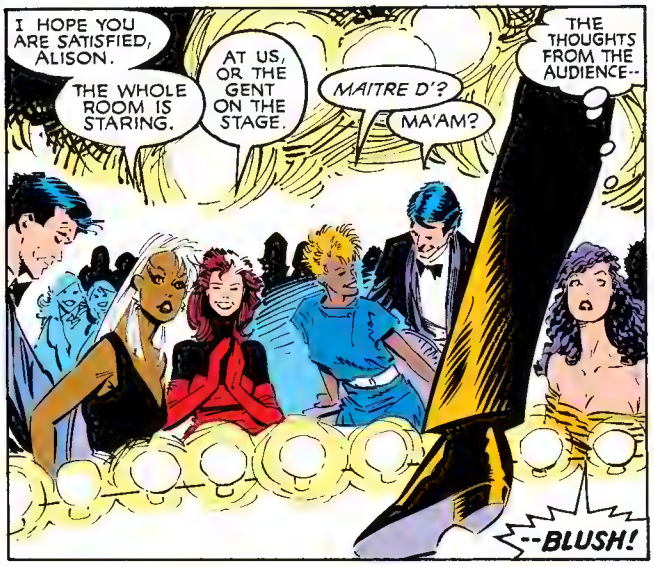
I HAVE A SOLID SCANTRYA
SO--LIKE, WHEN YOU CATCH THIS MUTIE, DOC...
...WHAT'LL YOU DO WITH HER?
NOT TO WORRY. WE HAVE THE WILL, WE HAVE THE SKILL, WE HAVE THE TECHNOLOGY--!
WHIP!
WHICH WE DON'T REALLY COMPREHEND.
NOT HERE, DR. SNODGRASS. NOT NOW!
NEVEREADY

OUR CURRENT EQUIPMENT IS DERIVED FROM WHAT WE USED BACK IN MANHATTAN.
ONE NIGHT LAST SUMMER, SOMETHING HAPPENED, WE DON'T TALK ABOUT IT, THAT'S WHY WE LEFT TOWN AND CHANGED FIELDS.
EXCITABLE WOMAN. DON'T MIND HER.
BUT THE EQUIPMENT CHANGED, TOO. IT SEEMS ALIVE, SOMEHOW. AND NASTY!
DOCTOR--NONE OF IT'S BEEN PROPERLY FIELD TESTED!
THEN, MY DEAR, LET US CONSIDER THIS OUR GOLDEN OPPORTUNITY!


ALL RIGHT, LADIES...
...NOW THAT WE'RE DRESSED TO KILL--


-- LET'S PARTY!

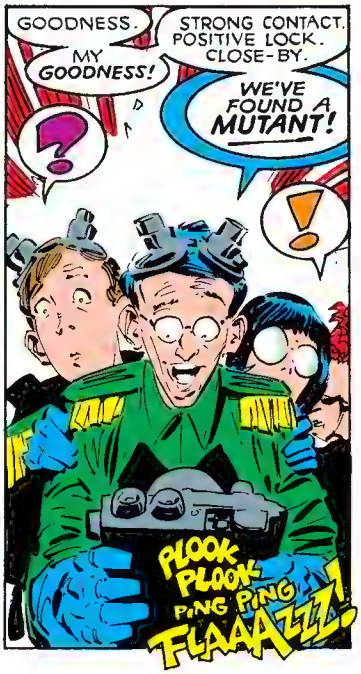

HOTBODS! THE "MEBURGER'S" OF NIGHTSPOTS, WHOSE NAME SAYS IT ALL.
I'VE SEEN BETTER.
AND I, FAR WORSE.
STORM! SOMEHOW, I NEVER QUITE IMAGINED YOU EVER DOING ANYTHING NASTY.
ALISON, SHE WEARS SKINTIGHT BLACK LEATHER!
EVERYBODY DOES THESE DAYS. THAT DOESN'T COUNT.
WOW!
WOW!
WOW!
WHAT ARE YOU LOOKING AT?
WOW!
WOW!
YOU DON'T WANNA KNOW.

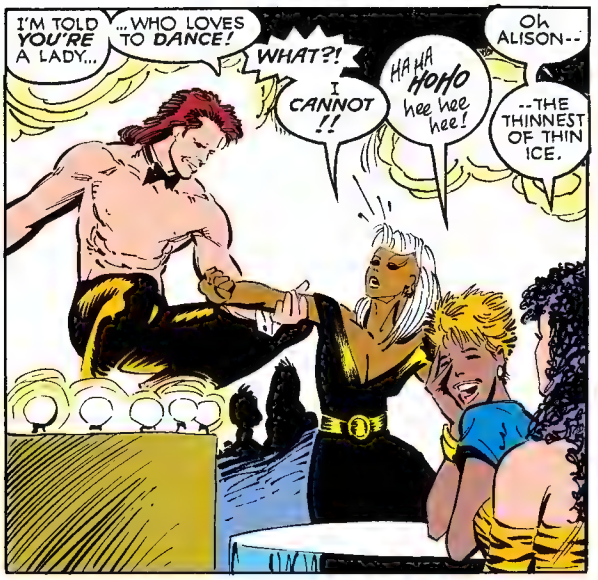

I HOPE YOU ARE SATISFIED, ALISON.
THE WHOLE ROOM IS STARING.
AT US, OR THE GENT ON THE STAGE.
MAITRE D'?
MA'AM?
THE THOUGHTS FROM THE AUDIENCE--
--BLUSH!

I WANT TO ARRANGE A SURPRISE FOR MY FRIEND.
CERTAINLY, MA'AM.
ALISON!
HAVE YOU LOST YOUR SENSES? SHE'LL MURDER YOU!
NO PROBLEM.
OUR PLEASURE.

I'LL TAKE THE RISK.
JUST DON'T SPOIL THINGS.
IT'S YOUR FUNERAL.
BET SHE LOVES IT!

THEY'RE MY PALS!
TOUGH.
YER UNDERAGE, KID, YOU CAN'T COME IN.

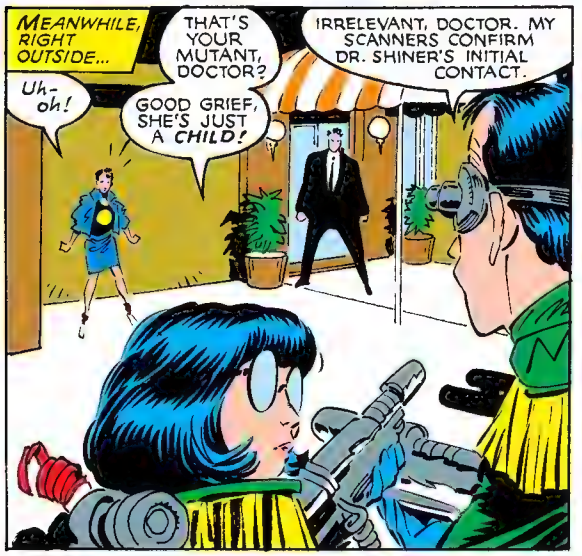

GOODNESS.
MY GOODNESS!
STRONG CONTACT. POSITIVE LOCK. CLOSE-BY.
WE'VE FOUND A MUTANT!
PLOOK PLOOK PING PING
FLAAAZZZ!

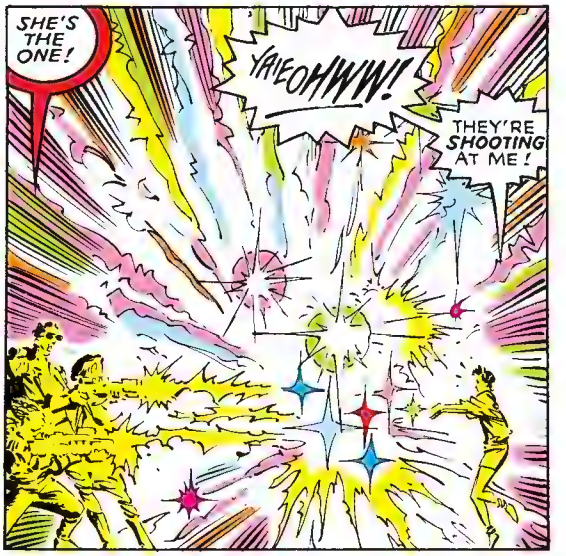

I'M TOLD YOU'RE A LADY...
...WHO LOVES TO DANCE!
WHAT?!
I CANNOT !!
HA HA HOHO hee hee hee!
Oh ALISON--
--THE THINNEST OF THIN ICE.

SURE YOU CAN.
FEEL THE MUSIC.
SEIZE THE MOMENT.
LET YOURSELF GO!
TRUST ME, YOU'LL LOVE IT!
I... I... I...

GIVE IT A WHIRL, GIRL!
YOU'VE NOTHING TO LOSE BUT YOUR DIGNITY!
DON'T BE A WEENIE, BOSS!
REMEMBER, STORM--
--PLAY!
Tweeet Whweeet!

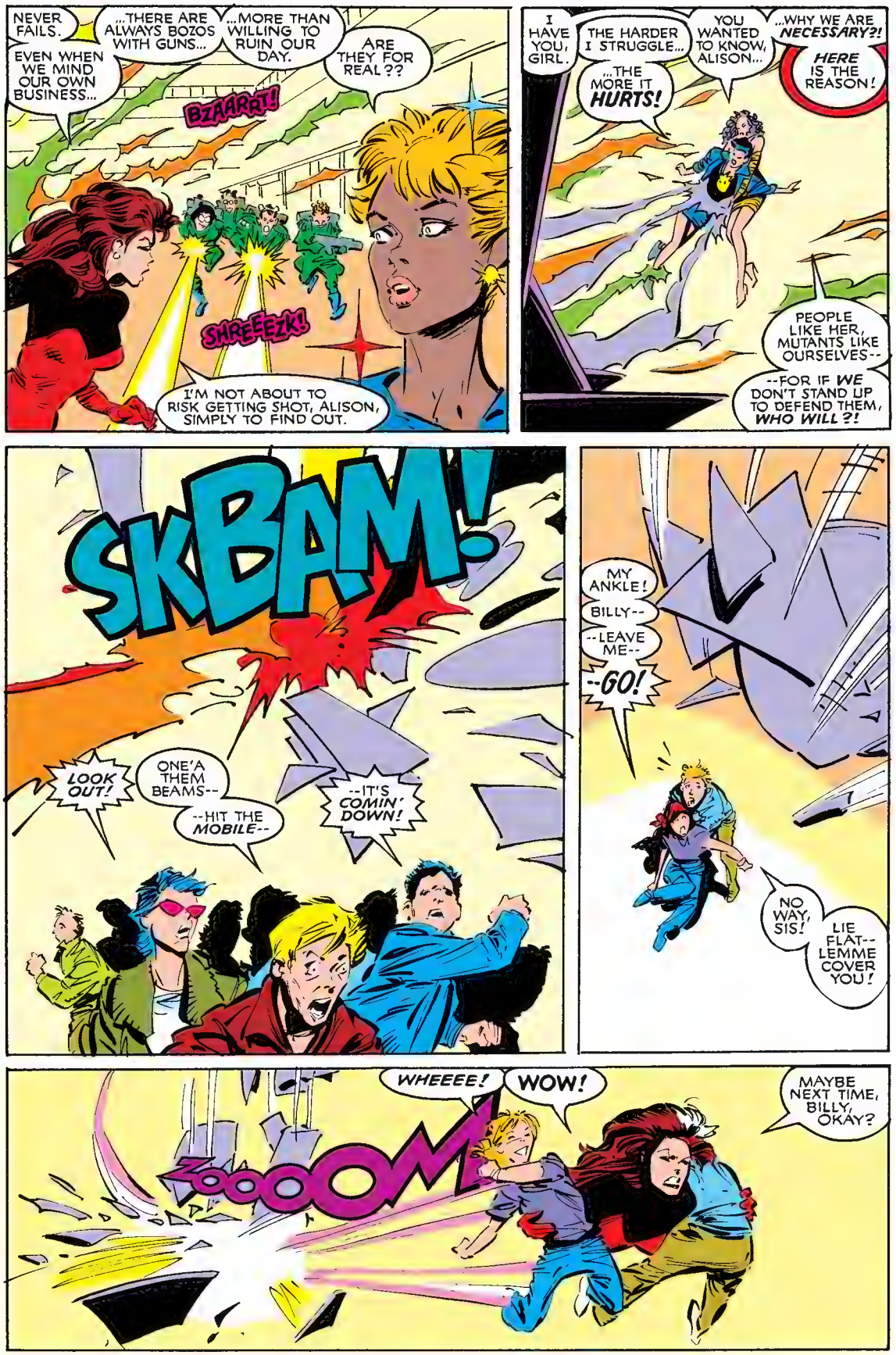
THAT'S THE SPIRIT!
IS THIS FUN, OR WHAT?

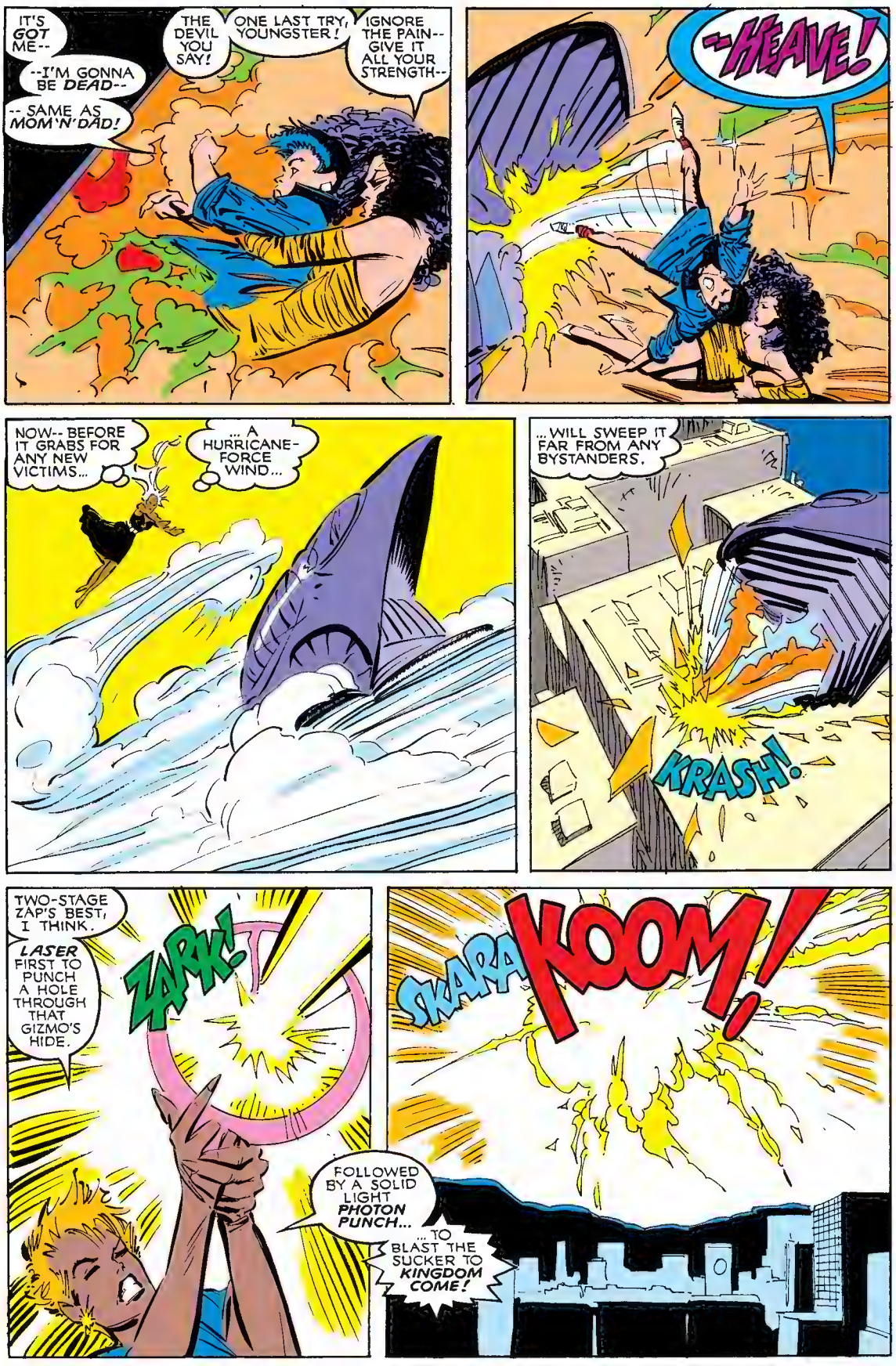

MEANWHILE, RIGHT OUTSIDE...
Uh-oh!
THAT'S YOUR MUTANT, DOCTOR?
GOOD GRIEF, SHE'S JUST A CHILD!
IRRELEVANT, DOCTOR. MY SCANNERS CONFIRM DR. SHINER'S INITIAL CONTACT.

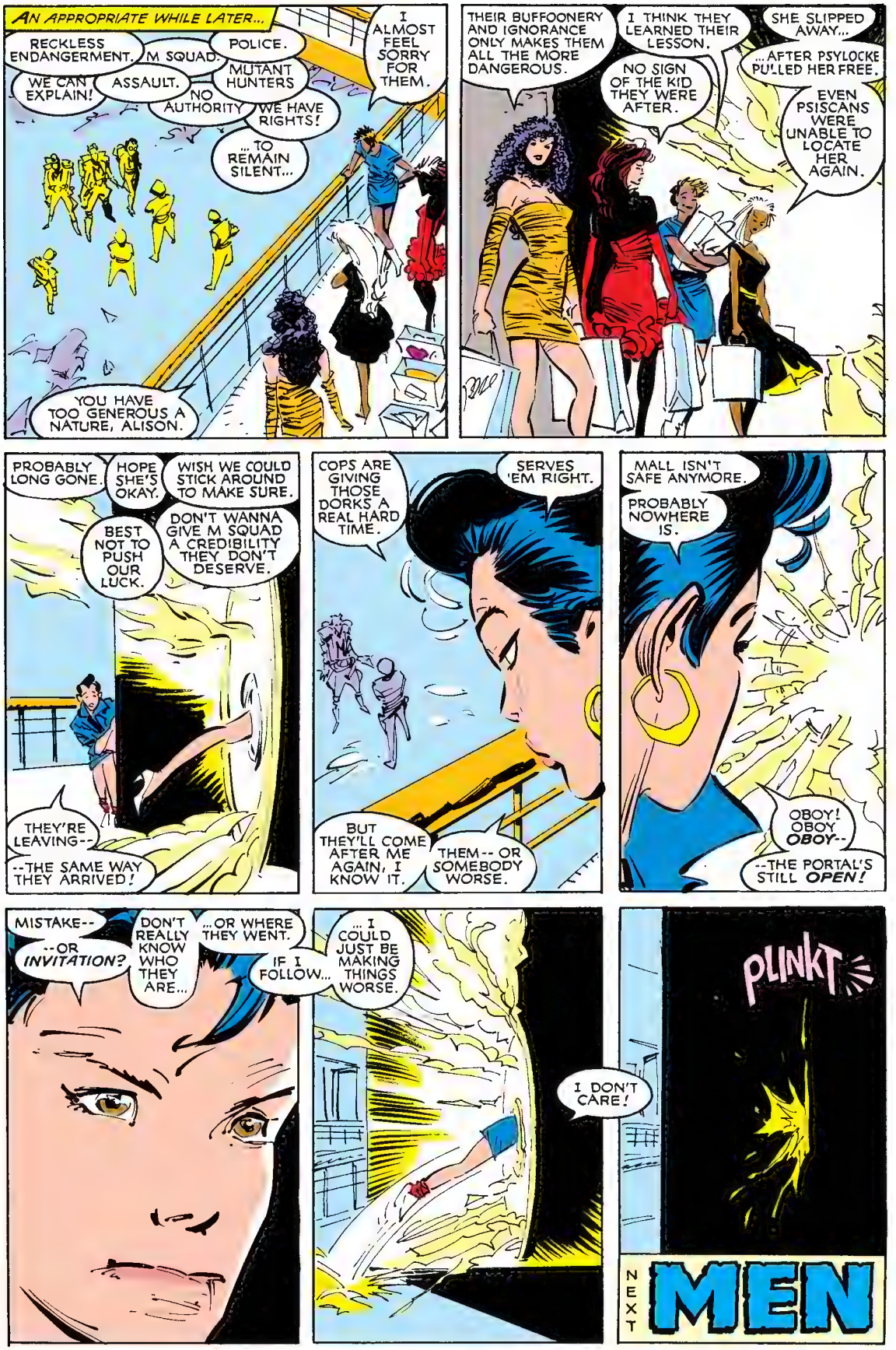

SHE'S THE ONE!
YAIEOHWW!
THEY'RE SHOOTING AT ME!

LOOK AT THOSE MOVES! ALMOST PUT ME TO SHAME!
WHO'D'A FIGURED OLD STUCK-UP PRINCESS STORM HAD IT IN HER.
HEY-- WHAT'S UP, BETTS?
SOMETHING--
"--HAPPENING NEARBY!"
WHO ARE YOU GUYS?!
WHY ARE YOU PICKING ON ME?!!
NOTHING PERSONAL, YOUNG LADY.
WE'RE M SQUAD.
PEOPLE WITH POWERS LIKE YOURS ARE A MENACE TO SOCIETY.
WE DEAL WITH YOU.
DOCTORS--
"--ACTIVATE THE MUTANT CONTAINMENT GRID!"
I DUNNO, GEORGE.
WE WEREN'T TOTALLY SURE OF ITS CAPABILITIES BEFORE--!
ONE LEARNS BY DOING, DEAR BOY.
EMPIRICISM UBER ALLES!
SWITCH ON!
NO!
CUT IT OUT!
YOU HAVE NO RIGHT!
LEAVE ME ALONE!
Vmmmm
SKRAMBO!
AWHW, GEEZ--
--CAN'T WE HAVE ONE NIGHT TO OUR-SELVES?!
TROUBLE!
HOW PERCEPTIVE, BETSY. WE NOTICED!

THESE STREAMER THINGIES--
-- ow!--
-- EVEN USING MY FIREWORKS--
--ow!--
--I CAN'T BUST LOOSE--
--OW!
THE GRID'S OUT OF CONTROL!
IT WON'T SHUT OFF!
WE WARNED YOU, DOCTOR!
TYPICAL CHIEF EXECUTIVE-- HE NEVER LISTENS!
WITH RESPECT, DOCTOR...
...CONSTRUCTIVE SUGGESTIONS WOULD SERVE US...
...BETTER NOW THAN PURE CRITICISM!
MODULE LOOKS LIKE SOMETHING LEFT OVER FROM "INFERNO."
AND HUNGRY AS A GREAT WHITE.
THAT CHILD IS OUR FIRST PRIORITY.
THE ENERGY TENDRILS APPEAR TO DRAW THE MACHINE'S VICTIMS INTO ITS MAW.
IF I CAN CONCENTRATE ITS ATTENTION-- FULL FORCE-- ON ME...
...PERHAPS I CAN WEAKEN IT SUFFICIENTLY FOR THE OTHERS TO AFFECT A RESCUE.
ALWAYS ASSUMING, OF COURSE, I AM NOT CONSUMED MYSELF.
WHO ARE THEY?!
TWO OF THEM ARE FLYING!
NO WONDER THE GRID RESPONDED SO STRONGLY.
THIS LOCALE IS A VERITABLE HOTBED OF MUTANT ACTIVITY!
FOLLOW ME, M SQUAD--
--LET'S GET THEM!


NEVER FAILS.
EVEN WHEN WE MIND OUR OWN BUSINESS...
...THERE ARE ALWAYS BOZOS WITH GUNS...
...MORE THAN WILLING TO RUIN OUR DAY.
ARE THEY FOR REAL??
BZAARRT!
SHREEEZK!
I'M NOT ABOUT TO RISK GETTING SHOT, ALISON, SIMPLY TO FIND OUT.
I HAVE YOU, GIRL.
THE HARDER I STRUGGLE...
...THE MORE IT HURTS!
YOU WANTED TO KNOW, ALISON...
...WHY WE ARE NECESSARY?!
HERE IS THE REASON!
PEOPLE LIKE HER, MUTANTS LIKE OURSELVES--
--FOR IF WE DON'T STAND UP TO DEFEND THEM, WHO WILL?!
SKBAM!
LOOK OUT!
ONE'A THEM BEAMS--
--HIT THE MOBILE--
--IT'S COMIN' DOWN!
MY ANKLE!
BILLY--
--LEAVE ME--
--GO!
NO WAY, SIS!
LIE FLAT--LEMME COVER YOU!
WHEEEE!
WOW!
ZOOOOM
MAYBE NEXT TIME, BILLY, OKAY?


IT'S GOT ME--
--I'M GONNA BE DEAD--
-- SAME AS MOM'N'DAD!
THE DEVIL YOU SAY!
ONE LAST TRY, YOUNGSTER!
IGNORE THE PAIN-- GIVE IT ALL YOUR STRENGTH--
--HEAVE!
NOW-- BEFORE IT GRABS FOR ANY NEW VICTIMS...
... A HURRICANE-FORCE WIND...
...WILL SWEEP IT FAR FROM ANY BYSTANDERS.
KRASH!
TWO-STAGE ZAP'S BEST, I THINK.
LASER FIRST TO PUNCH A HOLE THROUGH THAT GIZMO'S HIDE.
ZARK!
FOLLOWED BY A SOLID LIGHT PHOTON PUNCH...
...TO BLAST THE SUCKER TO KINGDOM COME!
SKARA
KOOM!


AN APPROPRIATE WHILE LATER...
RECKLESS ENDANGERMENT.
M SQUAD.
POLICE.
WE CAN EXPLAIN!
ASSAULT.
MUTANT HUNTERS
NO AUTHORITY
WE HAVE RIGHTS!
... TO REMAIN SILENT...
I ALMOST FEEL SORRY FOR THEM.
YOU HAVE TOO GENEROUS A NATURE, ALISON.
THEIR BUFFOONERY AND IGNORANCE ONLY MAKES THEM ALL THE MORE DANGEROUS.
I THINK THEY LEARNED THEIR LESSON.
NO SIGN OF THE KID THEY WERE AFTER.
SHE SLIPPED AWAY...
...AFTER PSYLOCKE PULLED HER FREE.
EVEN PSISCANS WERE UNABLE TO LOCATE HER AGAIN.
PROBABLY LONG GONE.
HOPE SHE'S OKAY.
WISH WE COULD STICK AROUND TO MAKE SURE.
BEST NOT TO PUSH OUR LUCK.
DON'T WANNA GIVE M SQUAD A CREDIBILITY THEY DON'T DESERVE.
THEY'RE LEAVING--
--THE SAME WAY THEY ARRIVED!
COPS ARE GIVING THOSE DORKS A REAL HARD TIME.
SERVES 'EM RIGHT.
BUT THEY'LL COME AFTER ME AGAIN, I KNOW IT.
THEM-- OR SOMEBODY WORSE.
MALL ISN'T SAFE ANYMORE.
PROBABLY NOWHERE IS.
OBOY! OBOY OBOY--
--THE PORTAL'S STILL OPEN!
MISTAKE--
--OR INVITATION?
DON'T REALLY KNOW WHO THEY ARE...
...OR WHERE THEY WENT.
IF I FOLLOW...
... I COULD JUST BE MAKING THINGS WORSE.
I DON'T CARE!
PLINK!
NEXT
MEN

MARVEL
THE UNCANNY
X-MEN
TM
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APPROVED BY THE COMICS CODE
AUTHORITY
ULP! WE'RE SURROUNDED BY HOSTILE ALIENS!
BE A SHAME IF SOMETHING BAD HAPPENS TO MY NICE, NEW JACKET!

MEN!
THE UNCANNY X-MEN
PRESENTED BY STAN LEE
FOR THOSE WHO COMPLAINED OF HAVING NO MORE NEW WORLDS TO CONQUER...
...I GIVE YOU THE PLANET EARTH!

HOWCUM *WE* ALWAYS HAVE TO LOOK AT HIS BACK?
COUNT YOUR BLESSINGS.
LET THE *CADENCE* SOUND--
--AND THE *CONQUEST* GO FORTH!
NEAT SPEECH, huh?
I PREFER *KILLING!*
GROONNK!
SSSS--HUNH! HSSS--HUNH!
TELL ME--
--DOES YOUR WIFE...
...GET GOOD FM RECEPTION?
BET YOU CAN'T NAME EVERY-BODY HERE!
DO I KNOW *YOU*?
LUNCH?
Sigh!
K-ROK!
I'M SORRY, THAT NUMBER IS NO LONGER IN SERVICE.

MAKE A FORTUNE WIDDA TOOTHPASTE CONCESSION.
CHEEZ-- TALK ABOUT'CHER LOW-RENT BAD GUYS!
LUNCH!
WHAT'S HE SAY?
WHO CARES?
OF *COURSE* I STILL RESPECT YOU.

BLAH BLAH BLAH **CHRIS CLAREMONT** WRITER
BLAH **ROB LEIFELD** GUEST PENCILER BLAB
BOOTY BLAB **DAN GREEN** INKER PILLAGE
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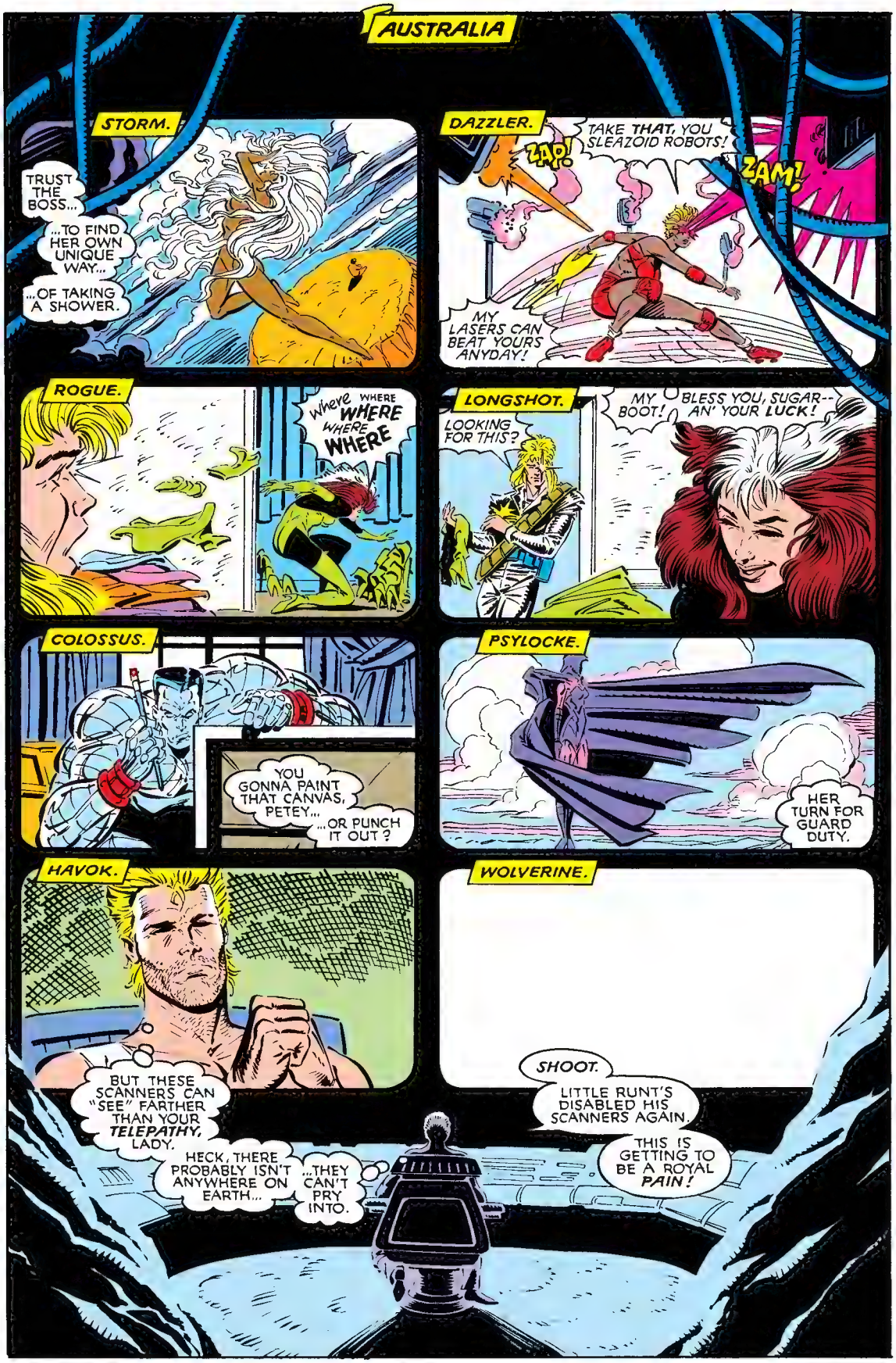
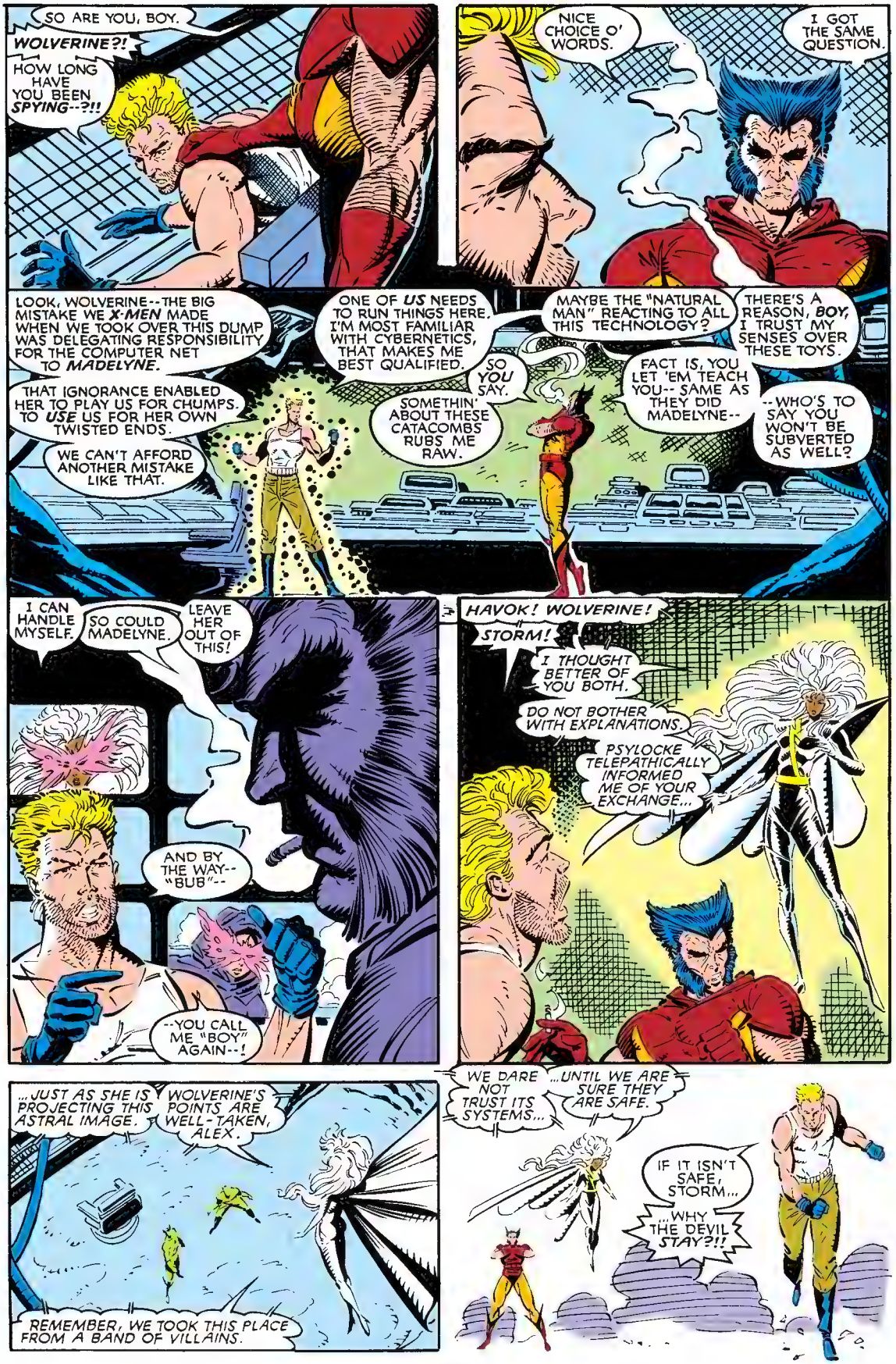
DESTRUCTION **BOB HARRAS** EDITOR BLAH
BLAH BLAH **TOM DeFALCO** MASTER BOMBER

THE SPEECH-- IN ITS ENTIRETY-- IS CARRIED LIVE ACROSS THE FLEETCOM VIDEO NET, EVEN TO THE MOST LOWLY AND FORGOTTEN SECTORS OF INFORMATION RETRIEVAL...
BLAH *TARGET* BLAH *AUSTRALIA* BLAH
REQUESTED FILES FROM IMPERIAL SHI'AR INFOBANK NOW INTEGRATED AND ON-LINE. PRECIS FOLLOWS.
OBJECTIVE HAS BEEN THE SITE OF NUMEROUS HOSTILE INCURSIONS BY SUCH STAR-FARING RACES AS THE KREE, SKRULL, AAKON, BADOON-- AMONG MANY OTHERS--RESULTING UNIFORMLY IN DEFEAT FOR THE AGGRESSORS.
WHAT?
FURTHER, OBJECTIVE HAS SUCCESSFULLY REPULSED MULTIPLE ASSAULTS BY THE WORLD-DEVOURER *GALACTUS*. IT IS THE ONLY PLANET KNOWN TO DO SO.
WH-*A*-AT?!?
FURTHER, OBJECTIVE IS THE HOME-WORLD OF GALACTUS'S CURRENT HERALD, IDENTIFYING NOMENCLATURE *NOVA*.
FURTHER, OBJECTIVE IS REPUTED TO BE THE ADOPTED HOME-WORLD OF THE *PHOENIX*.
WHA-*A*-AT?!?

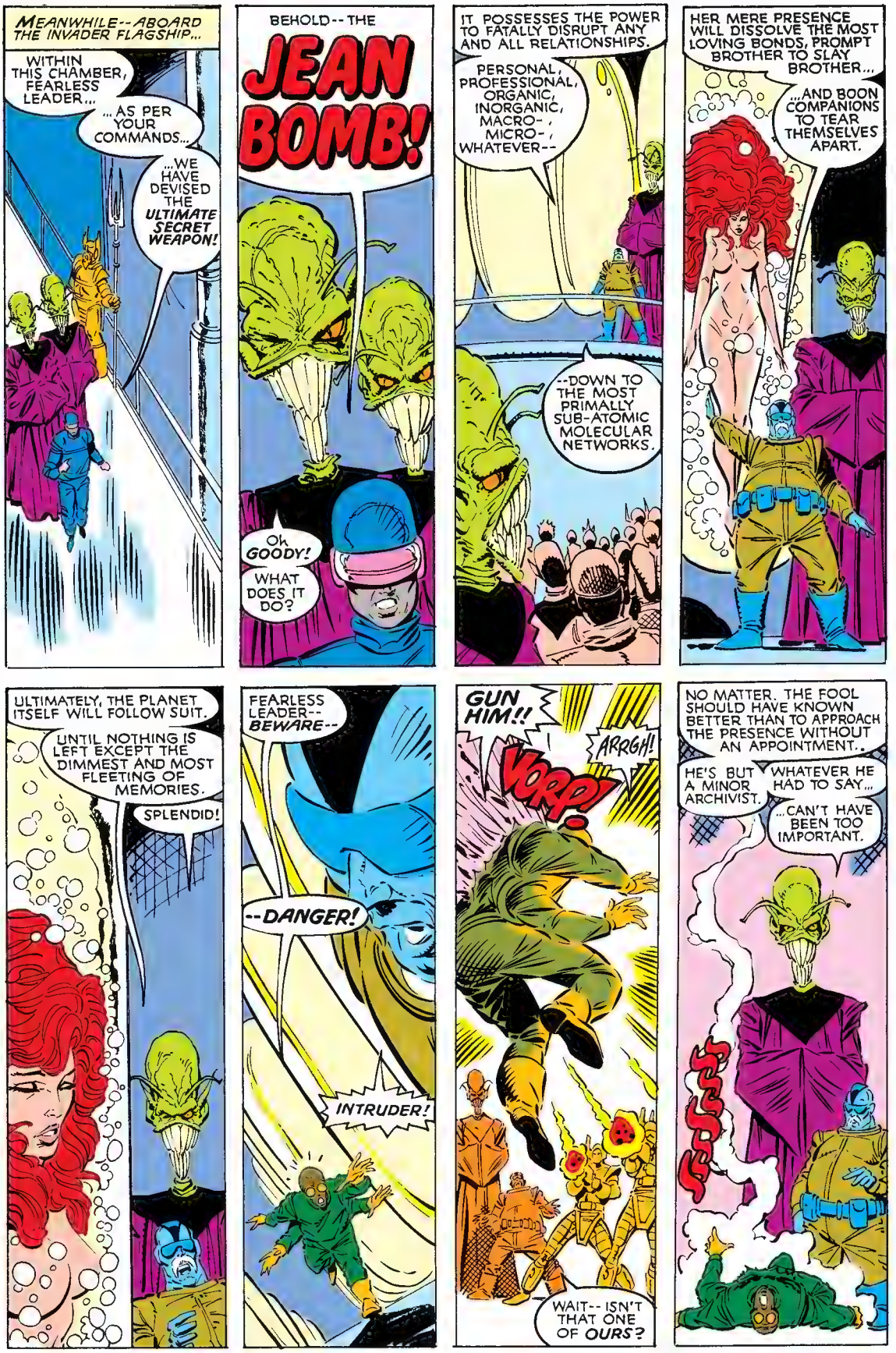
WE'RE *DOOMED!* WE'RE LOST! WE'RE ONLY MORTAL, WE'RE *MAD* TO PIT OURSELVES AGAINST SUCH AN ORB, WE DARE NOT UNLEASH THE *CONQUEST*--
--BUT OUR *FEARLESS LEADER* HAS ALREADY GIVEN THE WORD!
FOR SO LOWLY AN *ARCHIVIST* AS MYSELF, WITHOUT EVEN A *NAME* TO CALL MY OWN, TO OPPOSE HIS WILL--
--ESPECIALLY NOW EVENTS HAVE BEEN SET IN MOTION-- WOULD MEAN MY *LIFE!*
BUT TO STAY SILENT-- TO DO NOTHING--
--WILL COST HOW MANY *MORE???*

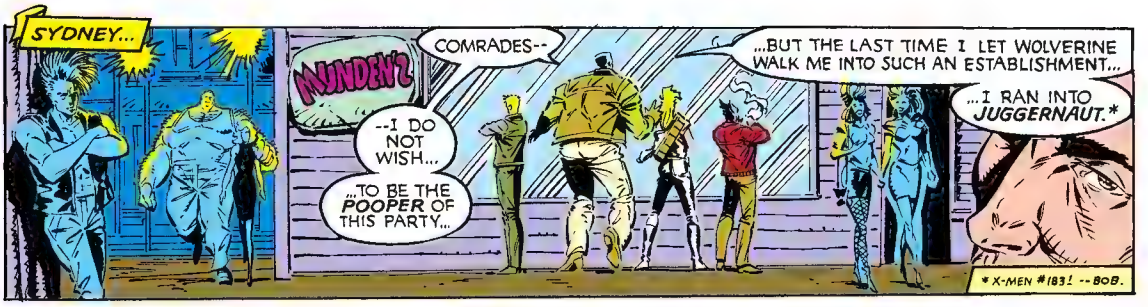

AUSTRALIA
STORM.
TRUST THE BOSS...
...TO FIND HER OWN UNIQUE WAY...
...OF TAKING A SHOWER.
DAZZLER.
TAKE THAT, YOU SLEAZOID ROBOTS!
ZAP!
ZAM!
MY LASERS CAN BEAT YOURS ANYDAY!
ROGUE.
Where WHERE WHERE WHERE
LONGSHOT.
LOOKING FOR THIS?
MY BOOT!
BLESS YOU, SUGAR-- AN' YOUR LUCK!
COLOSSUS.
YOU GONNA PAINT THAT CANVAS, PETEY...
...OR PUNCH IT OUT?
PSYLOCKE.
HER TURN FOR GUARD DUTY.
HAVOK.
BUT THESE SCANNERS CAN "SEE" FARTHER THAN YOUR TELEPATHY, LADY.
HECK, THERE PROBABLY ISN'T ANYWHERE ON EARTH...
...THEY CAN'T PRY INTO.
WOLVERINE.
SHOOT.
LITTLE RUNT'S DISABLED HIS SCANNERS AGAIN.
THIS IS GETTING TO BE A ROYAL PAIN!


SO ARE YOU, BOY.
WOLVERINE?!
HOW LONG HAVE YOU BEEN SPYING--?!!
NICE CHOICE O' WORDS.
I GOT THE SAME QUESTION.
LOOK, WOLVERINE--THE BIG MISTAKE WE X-MEN MADE WHEN WE TOOK OVER THIS DUMP WAS DELEGATING RESPONSIBILITY FOR THE COMPUTER NET TO MADELYNE.
THAT IGNORANCE ENABLED HER TO PLAY US FOR CHUMPS. TO USE US FOR HER OWN TWISTED ENDS.
WE CAN'T AFFORD ANOTHER MISTAKE LIKE THAT.
ONE OF US NEEDS TO RUN THINGS HERE. I'M MOST FAMILIAR WITH CYBERNETICS, THAT MAKES ME BEST QUALIFIED.
SO YOU SAY.
SOMETHIN' ABOUT THESE CATACOMBS RUBS ME RAW.
MAYBE THE "NATURAL MAN" REACTING TO ALL THIS TECHNOLOGY?
FACT IS, YOU LET 'EM TEACH YOU-- SAME AS THEY DID MADELYNE--
THERE'S A REASON, BOY, I TRUST MY SENSES OVER THESE TOYS.
--WHO'S TO SAY YOU WON'T BE SUBVERTED AS WELL?
I CAN HANDLE MYSELF.
SO COULD MADELYNE.
LEAVE HER OUT OF THIS!
AND BY THE WAY-- "BUB"--
--YOU CALL ME "BOY" AGAIN--!
HAVOK! WOLVERINE! STORM!
I THOUGHT BETTER OF YOU BOTH.
DO NOT BOTHER WITH EXPLANATIONS.
PSYLOCKE TELEPATHICALLY INFORMED ME OF YOUR EXCHANGE...
...JUST AS SHE IS PROJECTING THIS ASTRAL IMAGE.
WOLVERINE'S POINTS ARE WELL-TAKEN, ALEX.
REMEMBER, WE TOOK THIS PLACE FROM A BAND OF VILLAINS.
WE DARE NOT TRUST ITS SYSTEMS...
...UNTIL WE ARE SURE THEY ARE SAFE.
IF IT ISN'T SAFE, STORM...
...WHY THE DEVIL STAY?!!

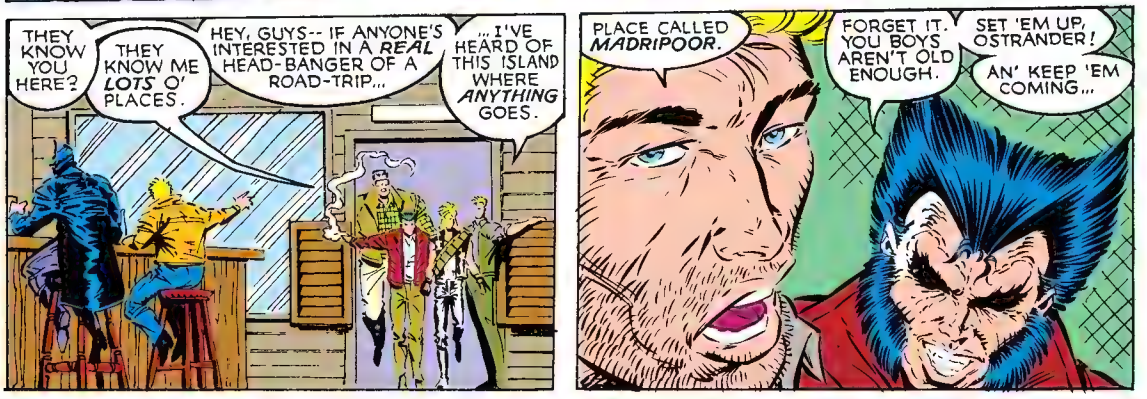
BOY'S ON A SHORT FUSE.
SMALL WONDER...
...CONSIDERING ALL HE HAS ENDURED...
...SINCE REJOINING THE TEAM.
HE GAVE HIS HEART TO TWO WOMEN...
...ONLY TO SEE THEM BOTH DESTROYED.
HE WAS HELPLESS TO SAVE THEM...
...YET HE BLAMES HIMSELF NONETHELESS.
YOU DO NOT HELP MATTERS, MY FRIEND, WITH YOUR FREQUENT ABSENCES.
MY TIME, ORORO, MY LIFE. MY BUSINESS.
I'M HERE WHEN YOU NEED ME.
BUT WHAT OF THE DAY WHEN YOU ARE NOT?
I'M NOT THE PROBLEM HERE, DARLIN', IT'S THE YOUNGSTERS.
ANY SUGGESTIONS, THEN...
...ABOUT HOW WE MIGHT RESOLVE IT?
WELL--YOU GALS HAD YOURSELVES A FINE OLD TIME ON YOUR OWN IN LA-LA LAND, JUST THE CURE YOU FIGURED FOR CABIN FEVER.
WHAT'S GOOD FOR THE GOOSE, DARLIN'...
SOMETIME LATER...
PIOTR NIKOLIEVITCH RASPUTIN--
-- WILL YOU RELAX!??
THIS REALLY WON'T HURT A BIT.
AND IT'S FOR YOUR OWN GOOD!
SO YOU SAY.
IT'S ONLY MAKE-UP, FOR GOODNESS SAKE!
AND STOP GRUMBLING UNDER YOUR BREATH IN RUSSIAN, IT ISN'T POLITE.
ALISON, MEN DO NOT WEAR SUCH THINGS!

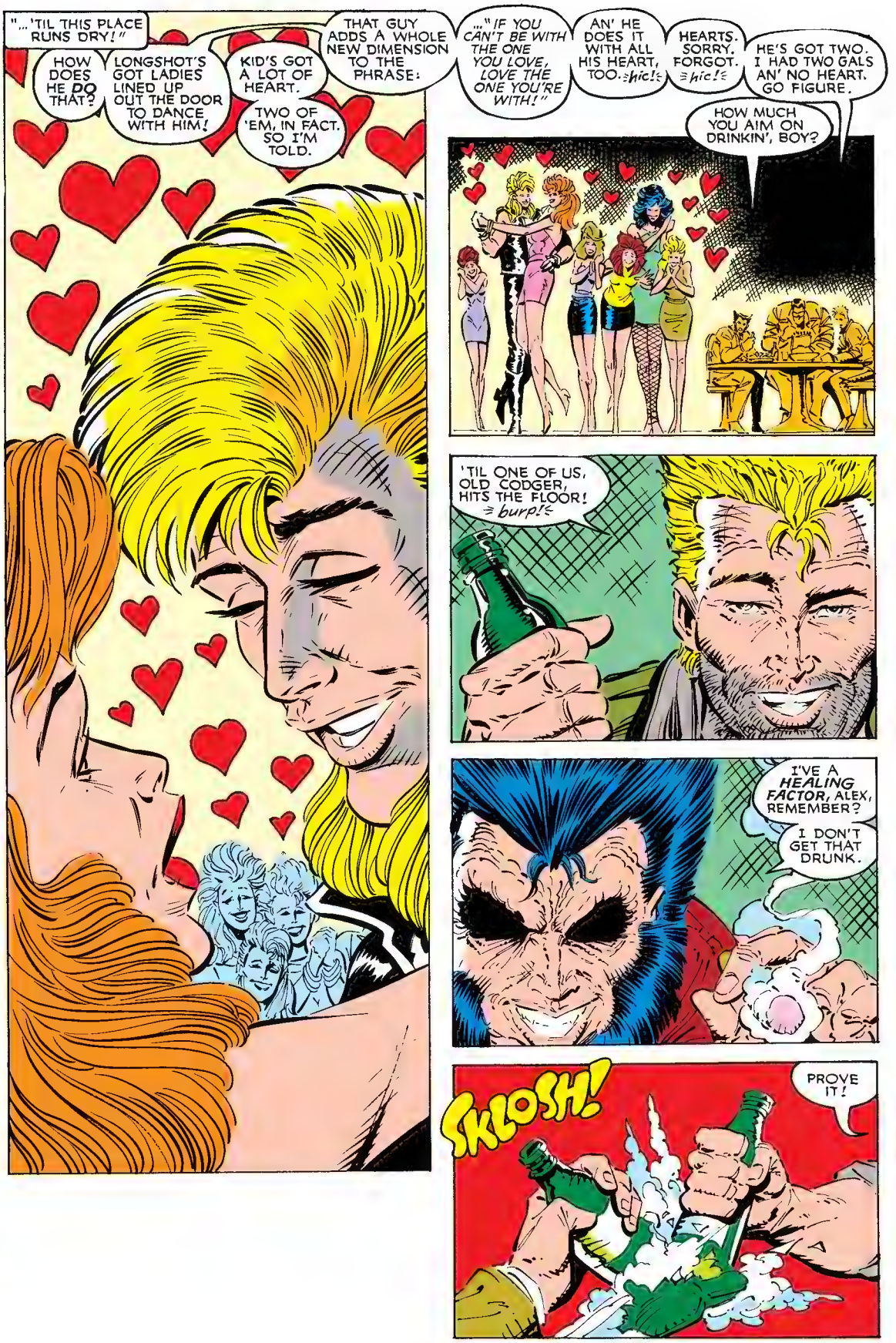
Oh POOH-- MEN ALSO DON'T HAVE BODIES OF ORGANIC CHROME STEEL!
I KEEP TRYING TO TRANS-FORM BACK TO FLESH.
WELL, THIS MEANS YOU WON'T HAVE TO.
TRUST ME, YOU'LL LOOK FINE!
STOP SQUINTING, THOUGH, YOU'LL RUIN THE LINE.
I AM SORRY-- BUT YOU GLOW SO BRIGHTLY, THE RADIANCE HURTS MY EYES.
Oops. NEEDED THE LIGHT TO SEE BETTER IN HERE, TOO MUCH OF A GOOD THING, I GUESS.
YEAH, WAY TOO MUCH.
BEEN NOTING THAT LATELY--
--MY LASER'S MORE POWERFUL, THE PHOTON BOLTS PACK MORE PUNCH...
...BUT MY OWN BASIC LUMINESCENCE HAS BEEN UPSHIFTING ALONG THE SPECTRUM AS WELL, FROM YELLOW INTO WHITE.
HOPE THAT DOESN'T TURN OUT AS OMINOUS AS IT SOUNDS.
Oh-- HI, GUYS!
CLOCK'S RUNNIN', LIGHTENGALE.
PETEY PUREHEART BETTER BE READY.
AS MUCH SO, TOVARISCH, AS I SHALL EVER BE.
AND COMRADE, SMILE WHEN YOU CALL ME THAT.
BETTER LIVING THROUGH REVLON, GUYS.
AM I A MARVEL, OR WHAT?
ON THE ESCARPMENT OVERLOOKING THEIR HOME, THE TEAM'S ABORIGINAL COMPANION GATE-WAY OPENS HIS TELEPORTAL...
Y'ALL BEHAVE, HEAR?
TRUST US, LADIES. WE'LL BE FINE.
NO NEED TO WAIT UP, EITHER.
WE'LL BE BACK WHEN WE'RE BACK.
WONDER HOW MUCH THEY'LL LEAVE STANDIN' BEHIND THEM?
ROGUE...
YEAH, BOSS?
...I WISH YOU HAD NOT ASKED.

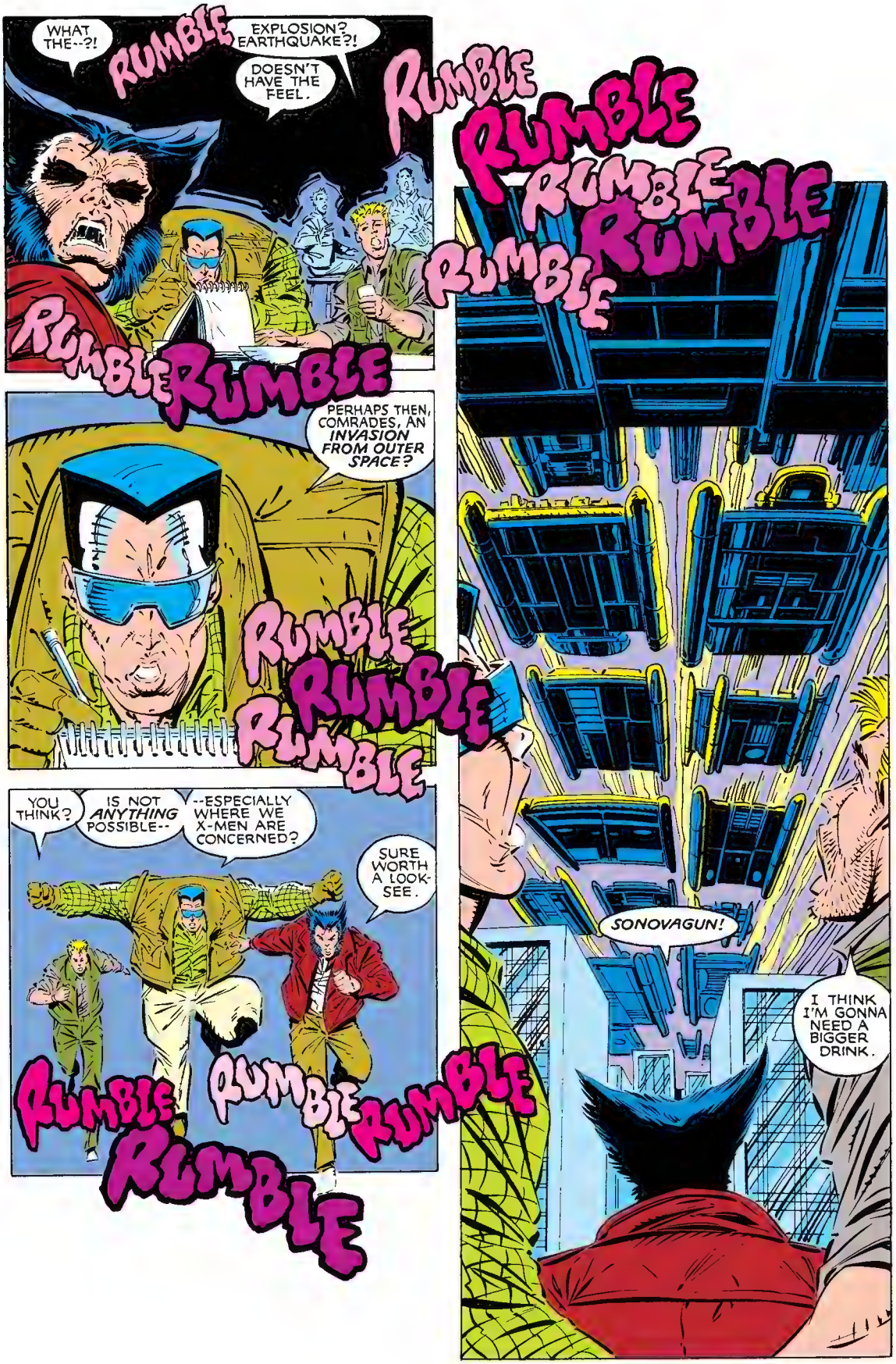

MEANWHILE--ABOARD THE INVADER FLAGSHIP...
WITHIN THIS CHAMBER, FEARLESS LEADER...
...AS PER YOUR COMMANDS...
...WE HAVE DEVISED THE ULTIMATE SECRET WEAPON!
BEHOLD--THE
JEAN BOMB!
Oh GOODY!
WHAT DOES IT DO?
IT POSSESSES THE POWER TO FATALLY DISRUPT ANY AND ALL RELATIONSHIPS.
PERSONAL, PROFESSIONAL, ORGANIC, INORGANIC, MACRO-, MICRO-, WHATEVER--
--DOWN TO THE MOST PRIMALLY SUB-ATOMIC MOLECULAR NETWORKS.
HER MERE PRESENCE WILL DISSOLVE THE MOST LOVING BONDS, PROMPT BROTHER TO SLAY BROTHER...
...AND BOON COMPANIONS TO TEAR THEMSELVES APART.
ULTIMATELY, THE PLANET ITSELF WILL FOLLOW SUIT.
UNTIL NOTHING IS LEFT EXCEPT THE DIMMEST AND MOST FLEETING OF MEMORIES.
SPLENDID!
FEARLESS LEADER--BEWARE--
--DANGER!
INTRUDER!
GUN HIM!!
ARRGH!
YORP!
WAIT--ISN'T THAT ONE OF OURS?
NO MATTER. THE FOOL SHOULD HAVE KNOWN BETTER THAN TO APPROACH THE PRESENCE WITHOUT AN APPOINTMENT..
HE'S BUT A MINOR ARCHIVIST.
WHATEVER HE HAD TO SAY...
...CAN'T HAVE BEEN TOO IMPORTANT.
SNIG


SYDNEY...
MUNDEN?
COMRADES--
--I DO NOT WISH...
...TO BE THE POOPER OF THIS PARTY...
...BUT THE LAST TIME I LET WOLVERINE WALK ME INTO SUCH AN ESTABLISHMENT...
...I RAN INTO JUGGERNAUT.*
* X-MEN #183! --BOB.

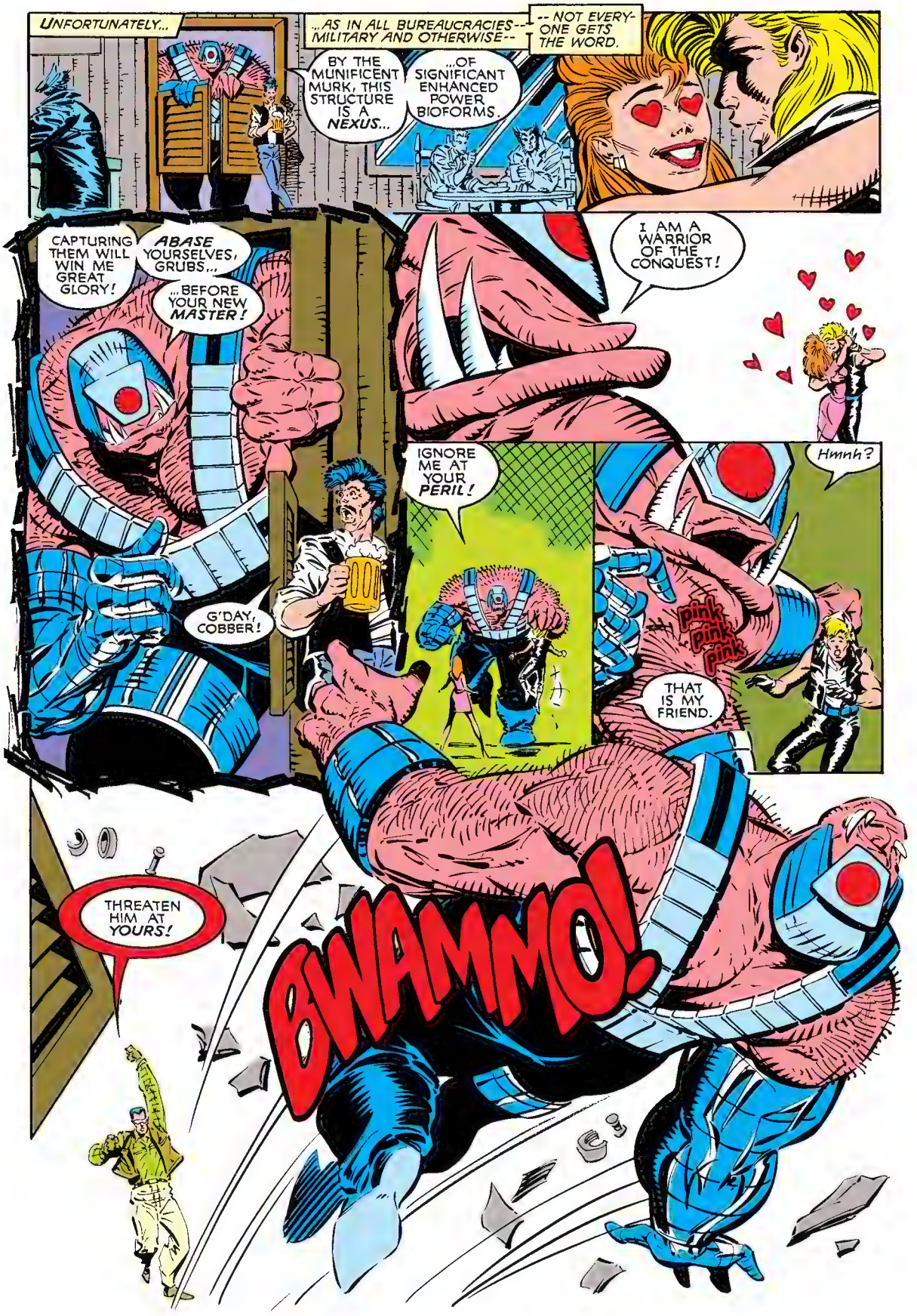
AN' A LOVERLY TIME WAS HAD BY ALL.
EASY FOR YOU TO SAY.
YOU DID NOT HAVE TO FIGHT HIM.
OH YE OF LITTLE FAITH.
GIMME A BREAK, PETEY, THIS PLACE IS KOSHER AS CAN BE.
ALL WE'RE GONNA DO IS BLOW OFF SOME STEAM...
...AN' HAVE US A GOOD TIME.
WHERE'S THE HARM IN THAT?
WHEREVER, WE'LL FIND IT.
YOU GOT AN ATTITUDE, BUB.
BITTER EXPERIENCE-- CHUM.


THEY KNOW YOU HERE?
THEY KNOW ME LOTS O' PLACES.
HEY, GUYS-- IF ANYONE'S INTERESTED IN A REAL HEAD-BANGER OF A ROAD-TRIP...
...I'VE HEARD OF THIS ISLAND WHERE ANYTHING GOES.
PLACE CALLED MADRIPOOR.
FORGET IT. YOU BOYS AREN'T OLD ENOUGH.
SET 'EM UP, OSTRANDER!
AN' KEEP 'EM COMING...

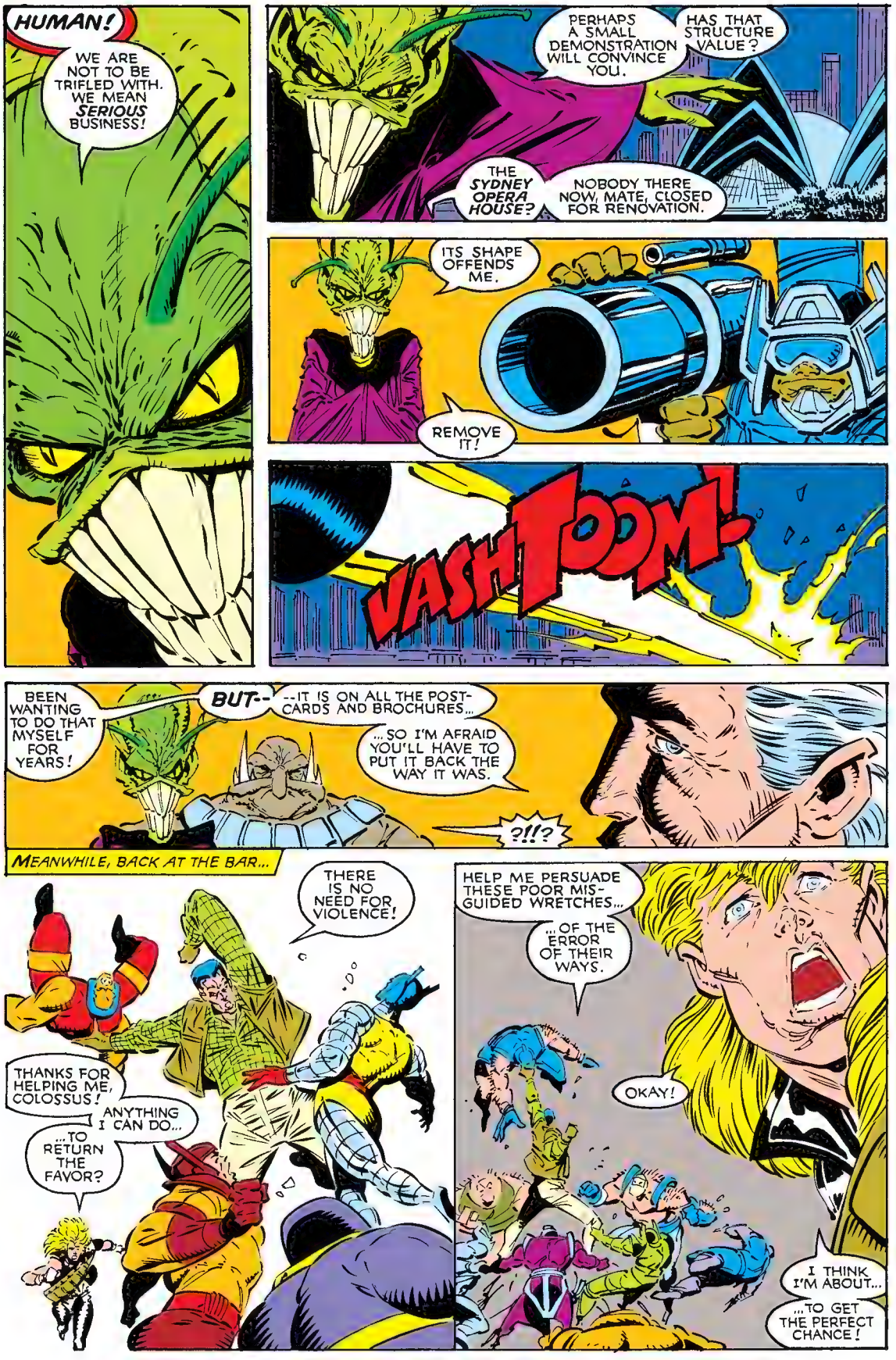

"... 'TIL THIS PLACE RUNS DRY!"
HOW DOES HE DO THAT?
LONGSHOT'S GOT LADIES LINED UP OUT THE DOOR TO DANCE WITH HIM!
KID'S GOT A LOT OF HEART.
TWO OF 'EM, IN FACT. SO I'M TOLD.
THAT GUY ADDS A WHOLE NEW DIMENSION TO THE PHRASE:
..."IF YOU CAN'T BE WITH THE ONE YOU LOVE, LOVE THE ONE YOU'RE WITH!"
AN' HE DOES IT WITH ALL HIS HEART, TOO.
≡hic!≡
HEARTS. SORRY. FORGOT.
≡hic!≡
HE'S GOT TWO. I HAD TWO GALS AN' NO HEART. GO FIGURE.
HOW MUCH YOU AIM ON DRINKIN', BOY?
'TIL ONE OF US, OLD CODGER, HITS THE FLOOR!
≡burp!≡
I'VE A HEALING FACTOR, ALEX, REMEMBER?
I DON'T GET THAT DRUNK.
SKLOSH!
PROVE IT!


WHAT THE--?!
RUMBLE
EXPLOSION? EARTHQUAKE?!
DOESN'T HAVE THE FEEL.
RUMBLE
RUMBLE
RUMBLE
RUMBLE
RUMBLE
RUMBLE
RUMBLE
PERHAPS THEN, COMRADES, AN INVASION FROM OUTER SPACE?
RUMBLE
RUMBLE
RUMBLE
RUMBLE
YOU THINK?
IS NOT ANYTHING POSSIBLE--
--ESPECIALLY WHERE WE X-MEN ARE CONCERNED?
SURE WORTH A LOOK-SEE.
RUMBLE
RUMBLE
RUMBLE
RUMBLE
RUMBLE
SONOVAGUN!
I THINK I'M GONNA NEED A BIGGER DRINK.

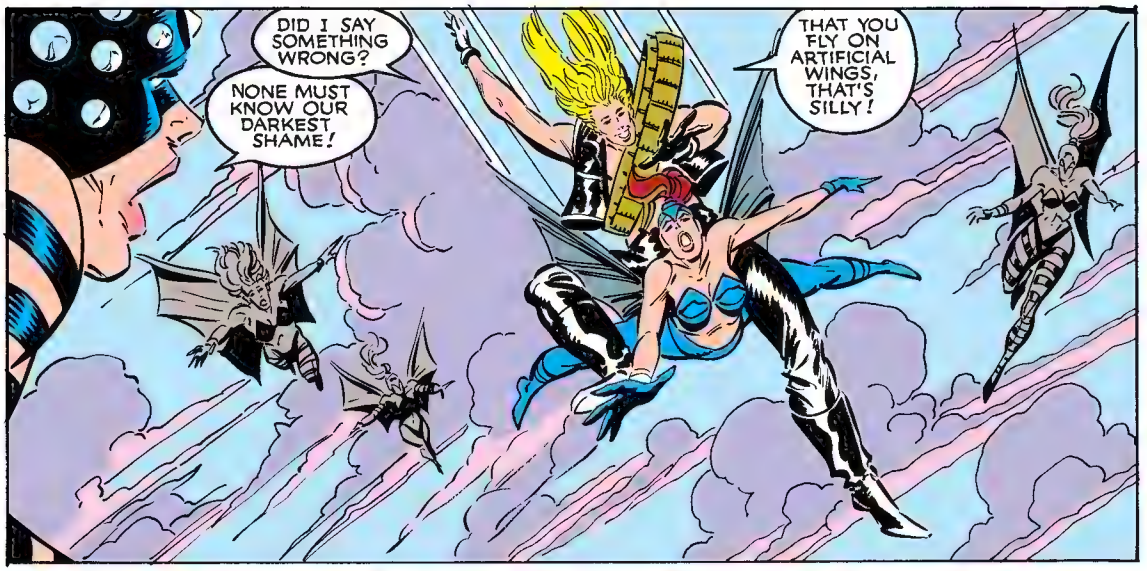
WITH PRACTICED EFFICIENCY, CONQUEST TROOP TRANSPORTS LAND THROUGHOUT THE CITY...
...DISGORGING HORDES OF FEARSOME, BATTLE-HARDENED WARRIORS EAGER FOR BATTLE.
THEIR ARRIVAL, QUITE UNDERSTANDABLY, DOES NOT GO UNNOTICED.
BETTER PUT SOME MORE SHRIMP ONNA BARBIE, LUV.
'PEARS WE GOT COMPANY.
WHUZZAT, DEAR?
TOURISTS.
BETTER GIVE THAT HOGAN WALLA A RING, WHILE YOU'RE AT IT...
...TELL 'IM TO BACK OFF THOSE "COME TO DOWN UNDER" COMMERCIALS O' HIS--
-- TOO FLIPPIN' EFFECTIVE, Y'ASK ME!
OI! MOVE THAT CRATE, YA BRUCE!
WHAT DO YOU SAY ME, PLEASE?
FLIPPIN' FOREIGNERS--
--DON'T KNOW ENOUGH TO DRIVE ON THE PROPER SIDE O' THE ROAD!
BEER?
MOTHER'S MILK, TO SOME!
DRINK UP, MATE, DRINK UP!
Y'KNOW, I WAS INNA ARMY MYSELF! HAD THE WORST PIG OF A SERGEANT--!
YOU ALSO--?
AND... WHAT DO YOU MEAN THEY ARE IGNORING US?!
ARE THEY MAD--OR...
...IS THIS SOME PLOY? PRELUDE TO A TRAP!?!
DO NOTHING TO PROVOKE THE LOCALS. ERR ALWAYS ON THE SIDE OF DISCRETION. WE WILL LET THEM MAKE THE FATAL FIRST MOVE.

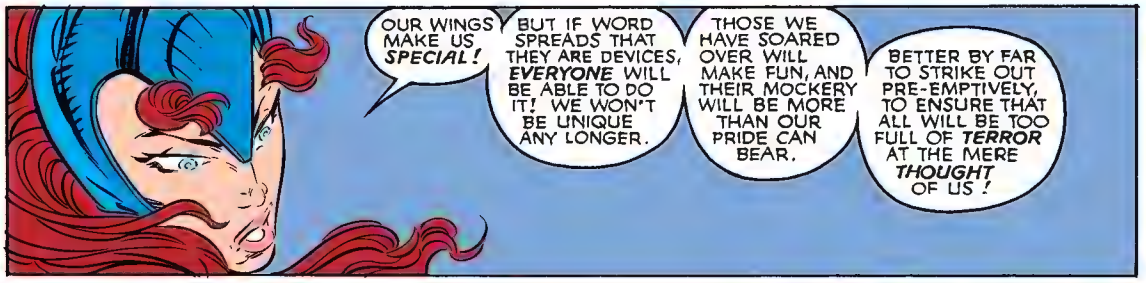

UNFORTUNATELY...
...AS IN ALL BUREAUCRACIES--- MILITARY AND OTHERWISE---
-- NOT EVERY-ONE GETS THE WORD.
BY THE MUNIFICENT MURK, THIS STRUCTURE IS A NEXUS...
...OF SIGNIFICANT ENHANCED POWER BIOFORMS.
I AM A WARRIOR OF THE CONQUEST!
CAPTURING THEM WILL WIN ME GREAT GLORY!
ABASE YOURSELVES, GRUBS...
...BEFORE YOUR NEW MASTER!
IGNORE ME AT YOUR PERIL!
Hmmh?
G'DAY, COBBER!
pink pink pink
THAT IS MY FRIEND.
THREATEN HIM AT YOURS!
BWAMMO!

AT LAST--
--SOMEONE ON THIS PULING, PATHETIC ORB...
...WITH BACKBONE ENOUGH TO PUT UP A FIGHT!
CADRE--
--ATTACK!
Uh...
...oh!
GRR!
SNARL
MAIM!
DISMEMBER!
INCINERATE!
PILLAGE!
THINK WE SHOULD?
TWENTY TO ONE ODDS?
Nnnahh!
MEANWHILE, DOWNTOWN...
I'M THE MAYOR OF SYDNEY, WELCOME TO TOWN.
AS CONQUEST STRIKE LEADER, I REQUIRE...
...YOUR IMMEDIATE AND UNCONDITIONAL SURRENDER!
YOU MEAN, YOU WANT TO TAKE OVER?
PRECISELY.
TERRIFIC!
THE JOB'S YOURS...
...AND WELCOME TO IT!
I'M PAST DUE FOR A VACATION ANYWAY!
?
!

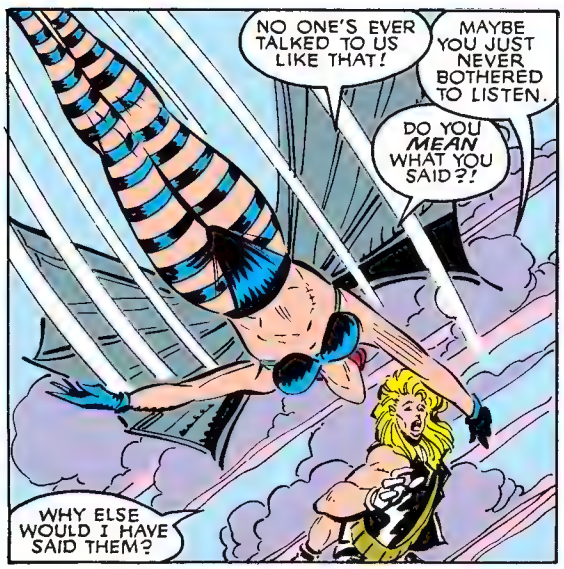

HUMAN!
WE ARE NOT TO BE TRIFLED WITH. WE MEAN SERIOUS BUSINESS!
PERHAPS A SMALL DEMONSTRATION WILL CONVINCE YOU.
HAS THAT STRUCTURE VALUE?
THE SYDNEY OPERA HOUSE?
NOBODY THERE NOW, MATE, CLOSED FOR RENOVATION.
ITS SHAPE OFFENDS ME.
REMOVE IT!
VASH
TOOM!
BEEN WANTING TO DO THAT MYSELF FOR YEARS!
BUT--
--IT IS ON ALL THE POST-CARDS AND BROCHURES...
...SO I'M AFRAID YOU'LL HAVE TO PUT IT BACK THE WAY IT WAS.
?!!?
MEANWHILE, BACK AT THE BAR...
THERE IS NO NEED FOR VIOLENCE!
THANKS FOR HELPING ME, COLOSSUS!
ANYTHING I CAN DO...
...TO RETURN THE FAVOR?
HELP ME PERSUADE THESE POOR MIS-GUIDED WRETCHES...
...OF THE ERROR OF THEIR WAYS.
OKAY!
I THINK I'M ABOUT...
...TO GET THE PERFECT CHANCE!

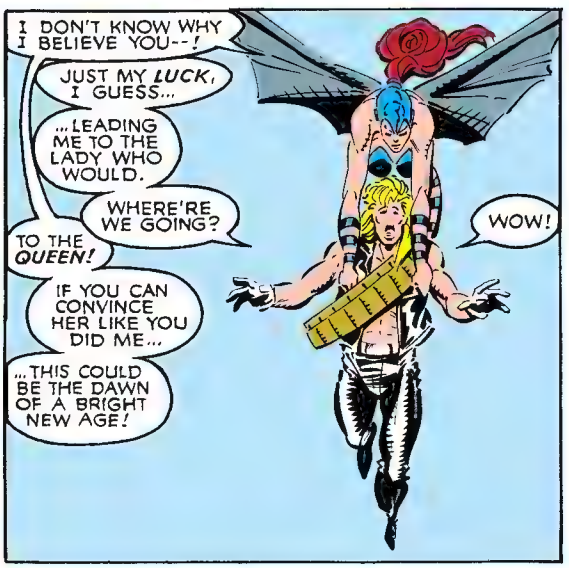
A MAN!
A PRETTY MAN!
I SAW HIM FIRST, HE'S MINE!
WHO--?
WE ARE SEE-CUBED-- THE COSMIC CUTIE COMMANDOS!
WE LIVE TO KILL!
WE KILL TO LIVE!
MEN!
ENJOY THIS FLIGHT, LITTLE GROUND-GRUBBER...
... AND THIS LAST SIGHT OF YOUR WORLD...
...BEFORE WE REND YOU...
...LIMB FROM BLOODY LIMB!
THAT ISN'T VERY NICE!
NEITHER ARE WE!
OUR C3-CADRES ARE FEARED THROUGHOUT KNOWN SPACE!
WHY ARE YOU SO FULL OF HATE?
YOU'VE GOT WINGS, YOU CAN FLY--
--I THINK THAT'S NEAT!
HE'S TOO QUICK--
--TOO AGILE...
...IMPOSSIBLE TO HOLD!
HEY! YOUR WINGS-- THEY'RE FAKES!
SISTERS, HE'S DISCOVERED OUR SECRET!
SLAY HIM!

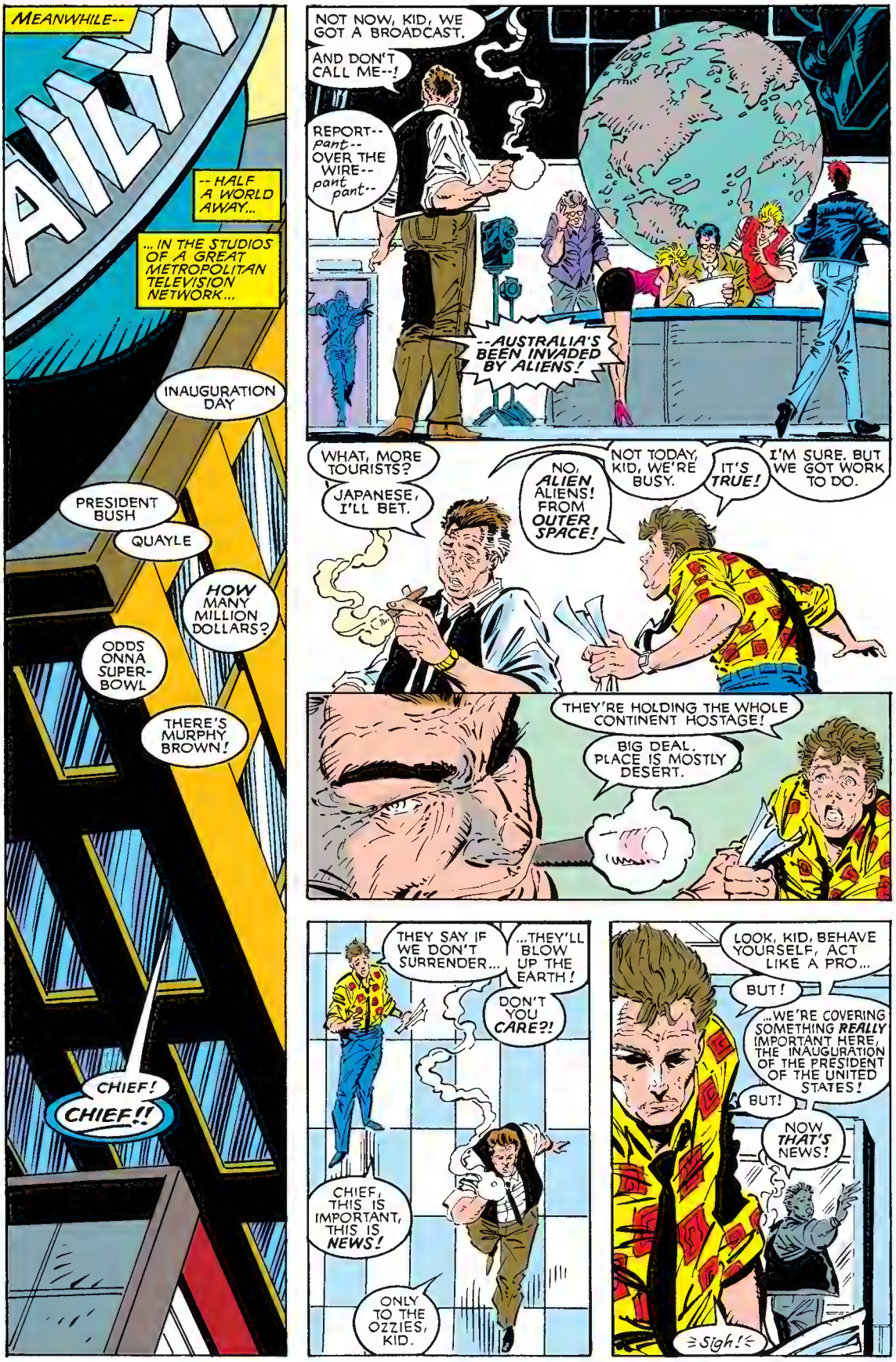

DID I SAY SOMETHING WRONG?
NONE MUST KNOW OUR DARKEST SHAME!
THAT YOU FLY ON ARTIFICIAL WINGS, THAT'S SILLY!

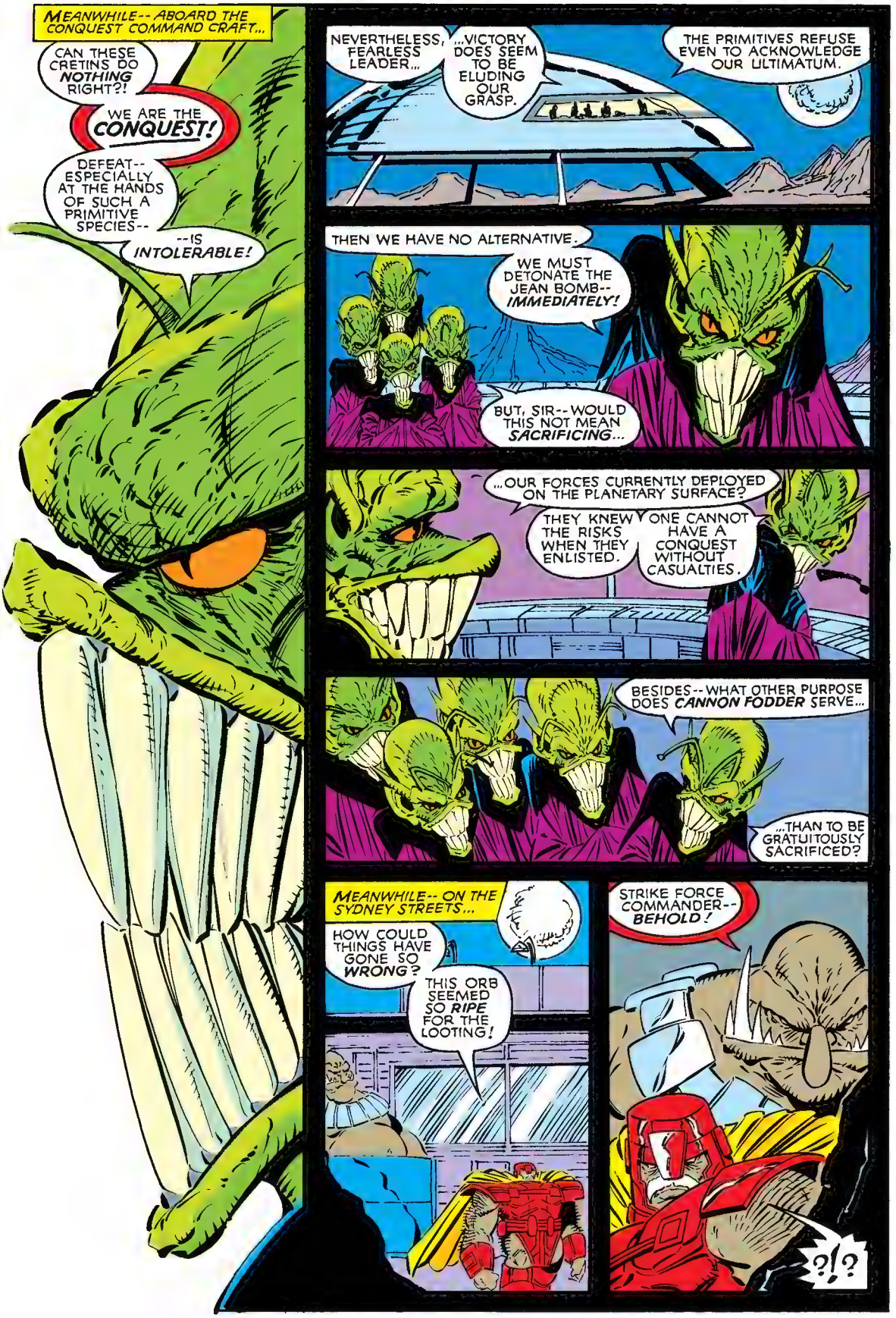

OUR WINGS MAKE US *SPECIAL!*
BUT IF WORD SPREADS THAT THEY ARE DEVICES, *EVERYONE* WILL BE ABLE TO DO IT! WE WON'T BE UNIQUE ANY LONGER.
THOSE WE HAVE SOARED OVER WILL MAKE FUN, AND THEIR MOCKERY WILL BE MORE THAN OUR PRIDE CAN BEAR.
BETTER BY FAR TO STRIKE OUT PRE-EMPTIVELY, TO ENSURE THAT ALL WILL BE TOO FULL OF *TERROR* AT THE MERE *THOUGHT* OF US!

WHO CARES ABOUT THE MECHANICS--
--YOU CAN *FLY!*
THE SKY'S SO BIG, WOULD IT REALLY HURT SO MUCH TO SHARE?
SURE, PEOPLE WILL LAUGH-- WITH *JOY* AT BEING PART OF THIS MOST WONDERFUL OF EXPERIENCES!

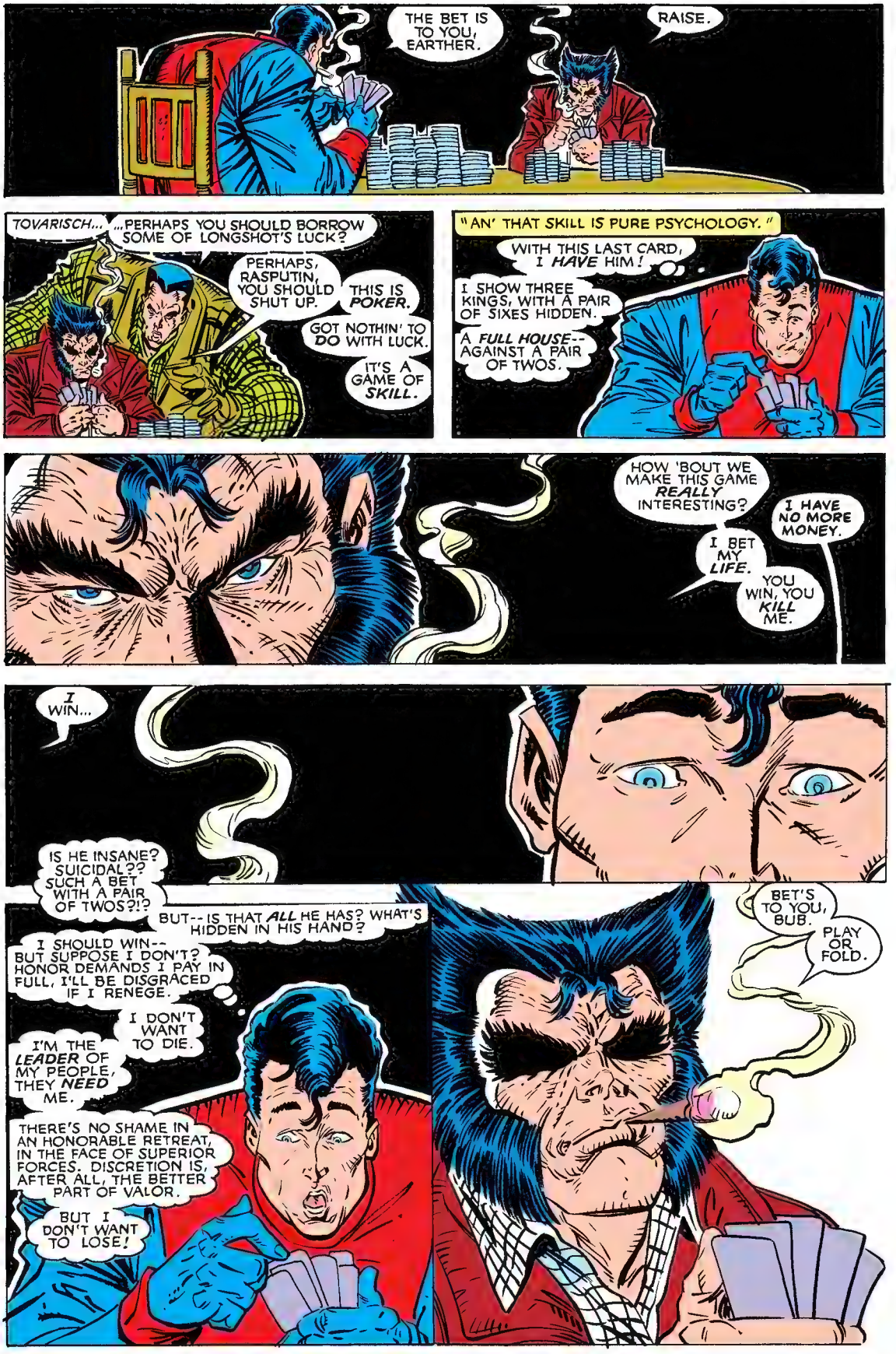

NO ONE'S EVER TALKED TO US LIKE THAT!
MAYBE YOU JUST NEVER BOTHERED TO LISTEN.
DO YOU *MEAN* WHAT YOU SAID?!
WHY ELSE WOULD I HAVE SAID THEM?

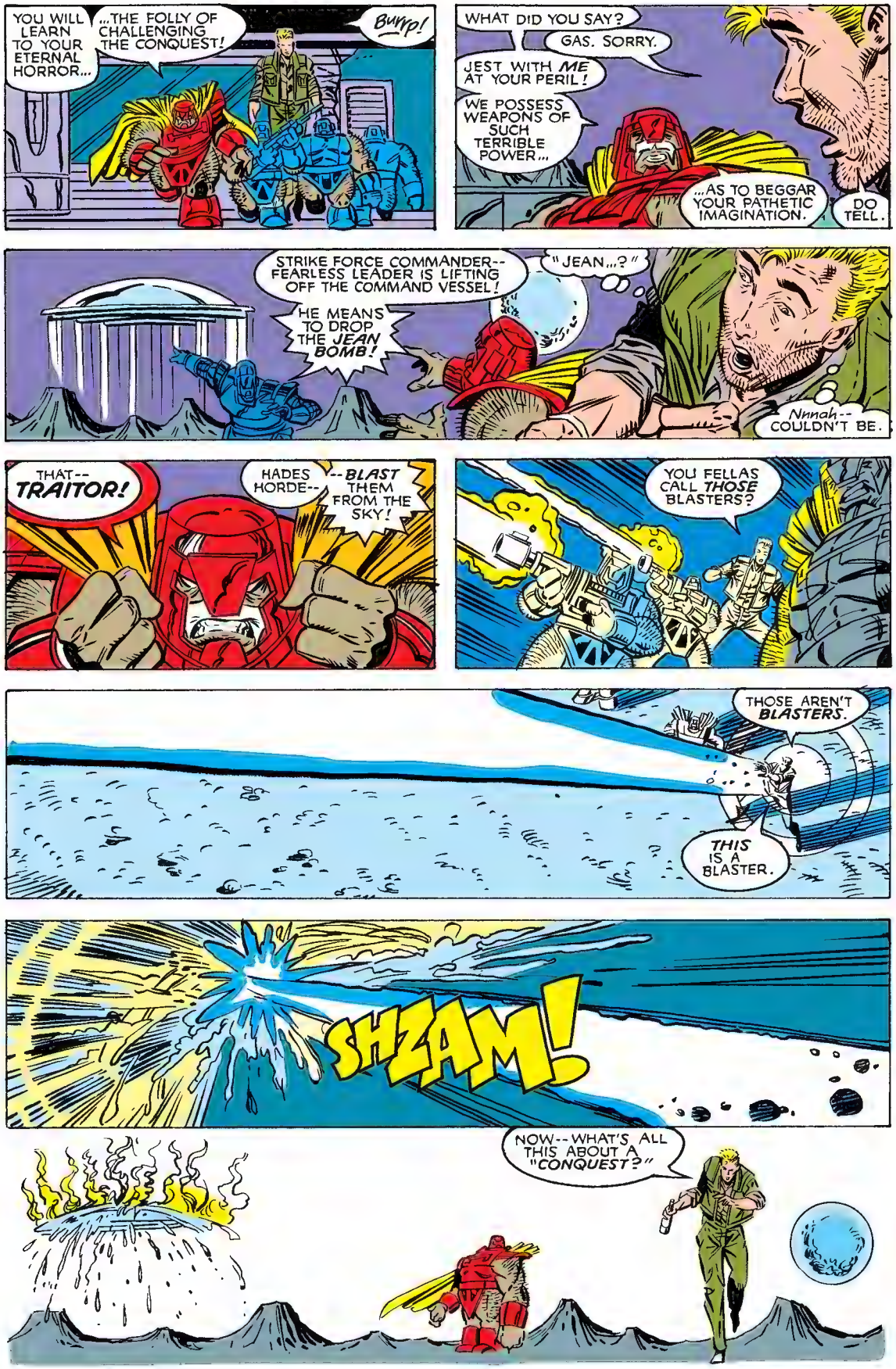

I DON'T KNOW WHY I BELIEVE YOU--!
JUST MY *LUCK*, I GUESS...
...LEADING ME TO THE LADY WHO WOULD.
WHERE'RE WE GOING?
TO THE *QUEEN!*
IF YOU CAN CONVINCE HER LIKE YOU DID ME...
...THIS COULD BE THE DAWN OF A BRIGHT NEW AGE!
WOW!

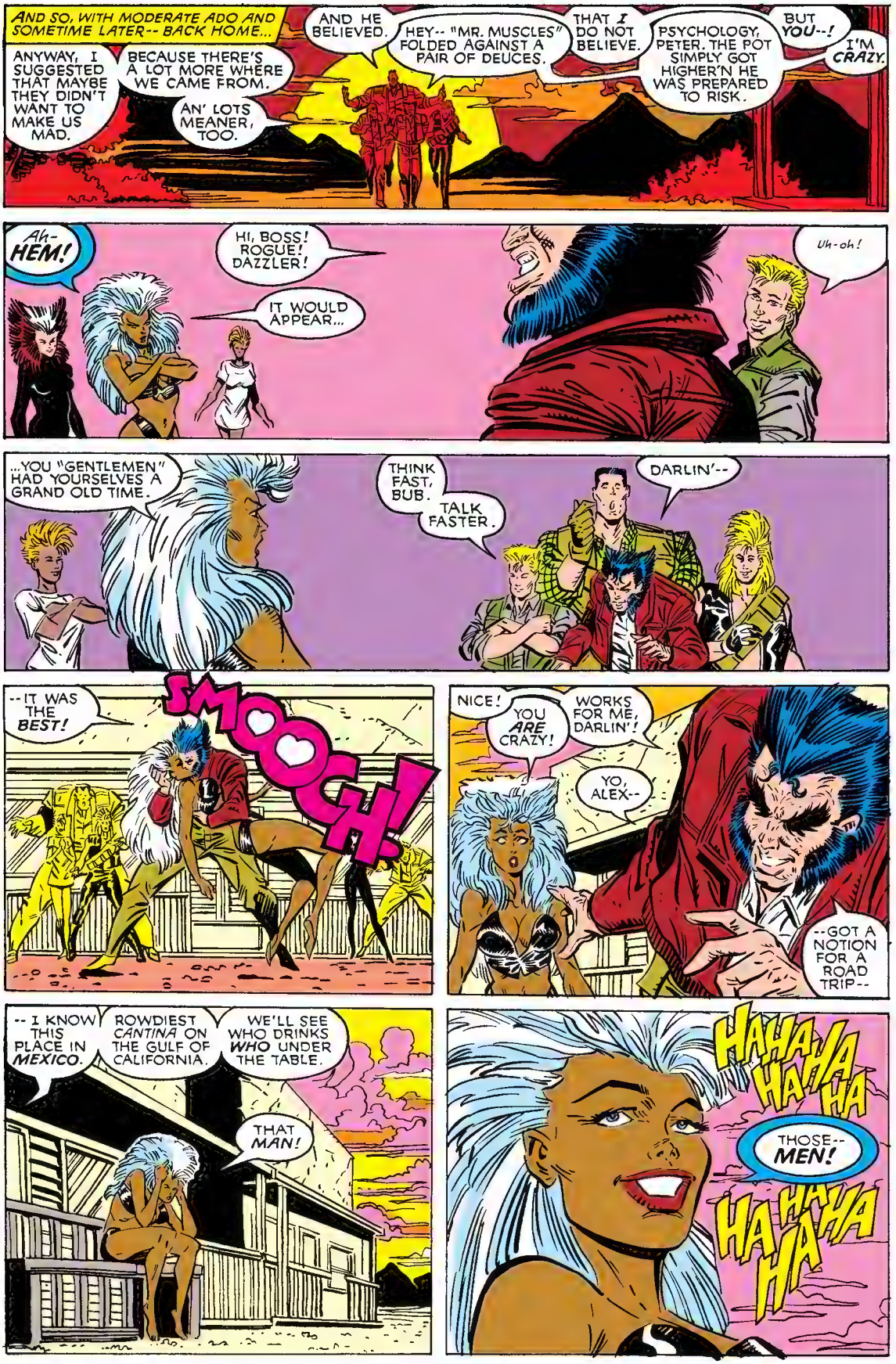

MEANWHILE--
AIIZY
-- HALF A WORLD AWAY...
... IN THE STUDIOS OF A GREAT METROPOLITAN TELEVISION NETWORK...
INAUGURATION DAY
PRESIDENT BUSH
QUAYLE
HOW MANY MILLION DOLLARS?
ODDS ONNA SUPER-BOWL
THERE'S MURPHY BROWN!
CHIEF!
CHIEF!!
NOT NOW, KID, WE GOT A BROADCAST.
AND DON'T CALL ME--!
REPORT-- pant-- OVER THE WIRE-- pant pant--
--AUSTRALIA'S BEEN INVADED BY ALIENS!
WHAT, MORE TOURISTS?
JAPANESE, I'LL BET.
NO, ALIEN ALIENS! FROM OUTER SPACE!
NOT TODAY, KID, WE'RE BUSY.
IT'S TRUE!
I'M SURE, BUT WE GOT WORK TO DO.
THEY'RE HOLDING THE WHOLE CONTINENT HOSTAGE!
BIG DEAL. PLACE IS MOSTLY DESERT.
THEY SAY IF WE DON'T SURRENDER...
...THEY'LL BLOW UP THE EARTH!
DON'T YOU CARE?!
CHIEF, THIS IS IMPORTANT, THIS IS NEWS!
ONLY TO THE OZZIES, KID.
LOOK, KID, BEHAVE YOURSELF, ACT LIKE A PRO...
BUT!
...WE'RE COVERING SOMETHING REALLY IMPORTANT HERE, THE INAUGURATION OF THE PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES!
BUT!
NOW THAT'S NEWS!
≥Sigh!≤

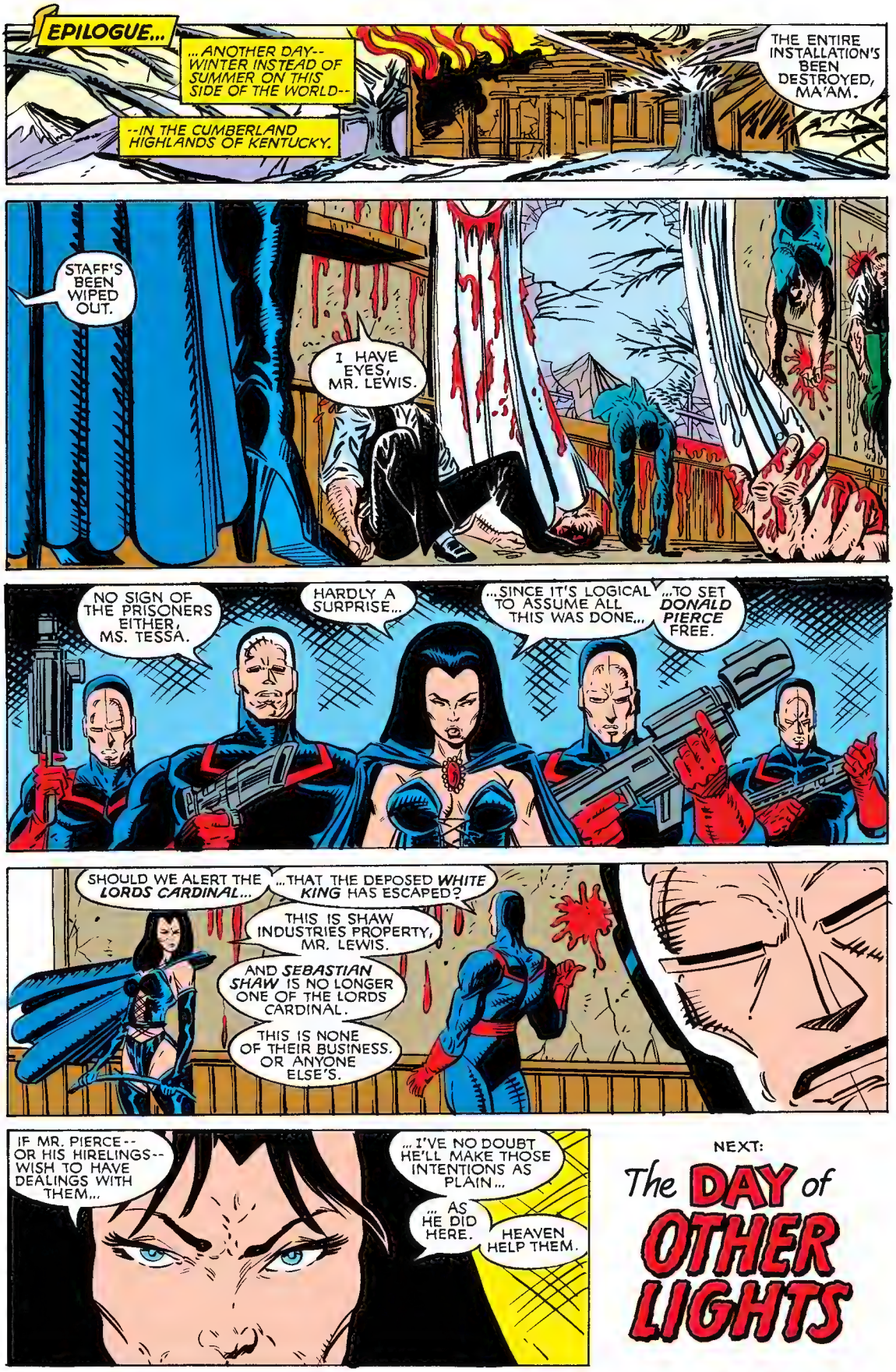

MEANWHILE-- ABOARD THE CONQUEST COMMAND CRAFT...
CAN THESE CRETINS DO NOTHING RIGHT?!
WE ARE THE CONQUEST!
DEFEAT-- ESPECIALLY AT THE HANDS OF SUCH A PRIMITIVE SPECIES--
--IS INTOLERABLE!
NEVERTHELESS, FEARLESS LEADER...
...VICTORY DOES SEEM TO BE ELUDING OUR GRASP.
THE PRIMITIVES REFUSE EVEN TO ACKNOWLEDGE OUR ULTIMATUM.
THEN WE HAVE NO ALTERNATIVE.
WE MUST DETONATE THE JEAN BOMB-- IMMEDIATELY!
BUT, SIR--WOULD THIS NOT MEAN SACRIFICING...
...OUR FORCES CURRENTLY DEPLOYED ON THE PLANETARY SURFACE?
THEY KNEW THE RISKS WHEN THEY ENLISTED.
ONE CANNOT HAVE A CONQUEST WITHOUT CASUALTIES.
BESIDES--WHAT OTHER PURPOSE DOES CANNON FODDER SERVE...
...THAN TO BE GRATUITOUSLY SACRIFICED?
MEANWHILE-- ON THE SYDNEY STREETS...
HOW COULD THINGS HAVE GONE SO WRONG?
THIS ORB SEEMED SO RIPE FOR THE LOOTING!
STRIKE FORCE COMMANDER-- BEHOLD!
?!?

AT LEAST, STRIKE FORCE COMMANDER...
...WE HAVE FOUND OUR MISSING CADRES.
I'M SO GLAD.
SUMMON THE HADES HORDE...
...WHILE I DETERMINE...
...WHO HERE IS TO BE SLAUGHTERED!
WHA-A-AT!?!
THE C3 TYRAX-- UGH-- DANCING WITH A MALE. BUT THEY HATE MEN!
IMPOSSIBLE!
I'M DREAMING!
NO-- I'M MAD!
THAT'S GOT TO BE IT. SOMETHING IN THE ATMOSPHERE SAPS OUR WARRIOR WILL!
WHAT IS THIS-- SOME GAME OF CHANCE?
7-CARD STUD
PAIR
BET'S TO YOU
CHECK TO THE RAISER
KING HIGH
#20
TREY TO A FLUSH
SEE
CALL
FOLD
NEXT DEAL
MY LORD AUTARCH, THIS IS THE GROSSEST...
...DERELICTION OF DUTY--!
POW!
I RAISE.
STRIKE FORCE COMMANDER--
--ARE YOU--?!!
FURIOUS?!
HOWEVER DID YOU GUESS?
YO! BRO!!
THIS IS NO PLACE FOR AN ARGUMENT. OR A FIGHT.
HOW 'BOUT WE TAKE THINGS OUTSIDE, WHERE WE CAN SETTLE 'EM PROPERLY.
EMINENTLY SENSIBLE.
DEAL WITH THEIR CHAMPION...
...THEN COME BACK AND HAVE THE REST FOR DESSERT.
YUM!


THE BET IS TO YOU, EARTHER.
RAISE.
TOVARISCH...
...PERHAPS YOU SHOULD BORROW SOME OF LONGSHOT'S LUCK?
PERHAPS, RASPUTIN, YOU SHOULD SHUT UP.
THIS IS POKER.
GOT NOTHIN' TO DO WITH LUCK.
IT'S A GAME OF SKILL.
"AN' THAT SKILL IS PURE PSYCHOLOGY."
WITH THIS LAST CARD, I HAVE HIM!
I SHOW THREE KINGS, WITH A PAIR OF SIXES HIDDEN.
A FULL HOUSE-- AGAINST A PAIR OF TWOS.
HOW 'BOUT WE MAKE THIS GAME REALLY INTERESTING?
I HAVE NO MORE MONEY.
I BET MY LIFE.
YOU WIN, YOU KILL ME.
I WIN...
IS HE INSANE? SUICIDAL?? SUCH A BET WITH A PAIR OF TWOS?!?
BUT-- IS THAT ALL HE HAS? WHAT'S HIDDEN IN HIS HAND?
I SHOULD WIN-- BUT SUPPOSE I DON'T? HONOR DEMANDS I PAY IN FULL, I'LL BE DISGRACED IF I RENEGE.
I DON'T WANT TO DIE.
I'M THE LEADER OF MY PEOPLE, THEY NEED ME.
THERE'S NO SHAME IN AN HONORABLE RETREAT, IN THE FACE OF SUPERIOR FORCES. DISCRETION IS, AFTER ALL, THE BETTER PART OF VALOR.
BUT I DON'T WANT TO LOSE!
BET'S TO YOU, BUB.
PLAY OR FOLD.


YOU WILL LEARN TO YOUR ETERNAL HORROR...
...THE FOLLY OF CHALLENGING THE CONQUEST!
Burrp!
WHAT DID YOU SAY?
GAS. SORRY.
JEST WITH ME AT YOUR PERIL!
WE POSSESS WEAPONS OF SUCH TERRIBLE POWER...
...AS TO BEGGAR YOUR PATHETIC IMAGINATION.
DO TELL.
STRIKE FORCE COMMANDER-- FEARLESS LEADER IS LIFTING OFF THE COMMAND VESSEL!
HE MEANS TO DROP THE JEAN BOMB!
"JEAN...?"
Nnnah-- COULDN'T BE.
THAT-- TRAITOR!
HADES HORDE--
--BLAST THEM FROM THE SKY!
YOU FELLAS CALL THOSE BLASTERS?
THOSE AREN'T BLASTERS.
THIS IS A BLASTER.
SHZAM!
NOW--WHAT'S ALL THIS ABOUT A "CONQUEST?"


AND SO, WITH MODERATE ADO AND SOMETIME LATER-- BACK HOME...
ANYWAY, I SUGGESTED THAT MAYBE THEY DIDN'T WANT TO MAKE US MAD.
BECAUSE THERE'S A LOT MORE WHERE WE CAME FROM.
AN' LOTS MEANER, TOO.
AND HE BELIEVED.
HEY-- "MR. MUSCLES" FOLDED AGAINST A PAIR OF DEUCES.
THAT I DO NOT BELIEVE.
PSYCHOLOGY, PETER. THE POT SIMPLY GOT HIGHER'N HE WAS PREPARED TO RISK.
BUT YOU--!
I'M CRAZY.
Ah- HEM!
HI, BOSS! ROGUE! DAZZLER!
IT WOULD APPEAR...
Uh-oh!
...YOU "GENTLEMEN" HAD YOURSELVES A GRAND OLD TIME.
THINK FAST, BUB.
TALK FASTER.
DARLIN'--
--IT WAS THE BEST!
SMOOCH!
NICE!
YOU ARE CRAZY!
WORKS FOR ME, DARLIN'!
YO, ALEX--
--GOT A NOTION FOR A ROAD TRIP--
-- I KNOW THIS PLACE IN MEXICO.
ROWDIEST CANTINA ON THE GULF OF CALIFORNIA.
WE'LL SEE WHO DRINKS WHO UNDER THE TABLE.
THAT MAN!
HAHAHAHA
THOSE-- MEN!
HAHAHAHA


EPILOGUE...
...ANOTHER DAY--WINTER INSTEAD OF SUMMER ON THIS SIDE OF THE WORLD--
--IN THE CUMBERLAND HIGHLANDS OF KENTUCKY.
THE ENTIRE INSTALLATION'S BEEN DESTROYED, MA'AM.
STAFF'S BEEN WIPED OUT.
I HAVE EYES, MR. LEWIS.
NO SIGN OF THE PRISONERS EITHER, MS. TESSA.
HARDLY A SURPRISE...
...SINCE IT'S LOGICAL TO ASSUME ALL THIS WAS DONE...
...TO SET DONALD PIERCE FREE.
SHOULD WE ALERT THE LORDS CARDINAL...
...THAT THE DEPOSED WHITE KING HAS ESCAPED?
THIS IS SHAW INDUSTRIES PROPERTY, MR. LEWIS.
AND SEBASTIAN SHAW IS NO LONGER ONE OF THE LORDS CARDINAL.
THIS IS NONE OF THEIR BUSINESS. OR ANYONE ELSE'S.
IF MR. PIERCE--OR HIS HIRELINGS--WISH TO HAVE DEALINGS WITH THEM...
...I'VE NO DOUBT HE'LL MAKE THOSE INTENTIONS AS PLAIN...
...AS HE DID HERE.
HEAVEN HELP THEM.
NEXT:
The DAY of OTHER LIGHTS

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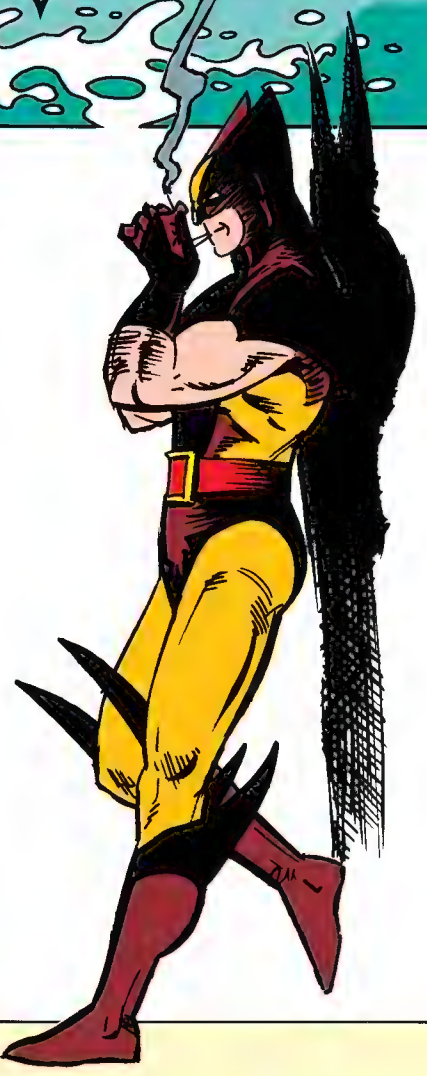
VOZ AND AUSTIN
PLUS...
JUBILEE FACES DEATH IN THE X-MEN'S OUTBACK TOWN IN
JUBILATION DAY!

ATLANTIS ATTACKS

chapter three

X-MEN



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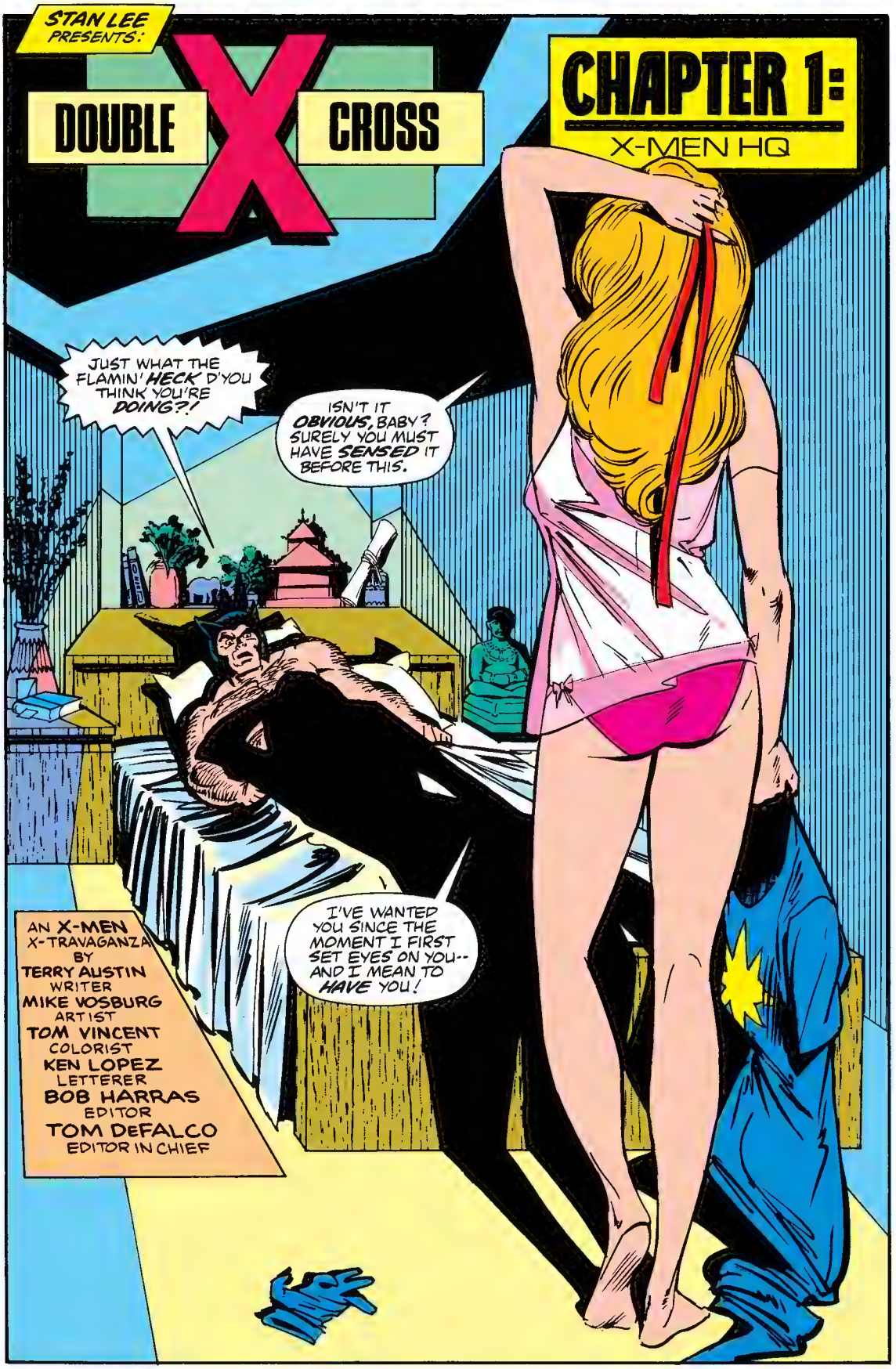
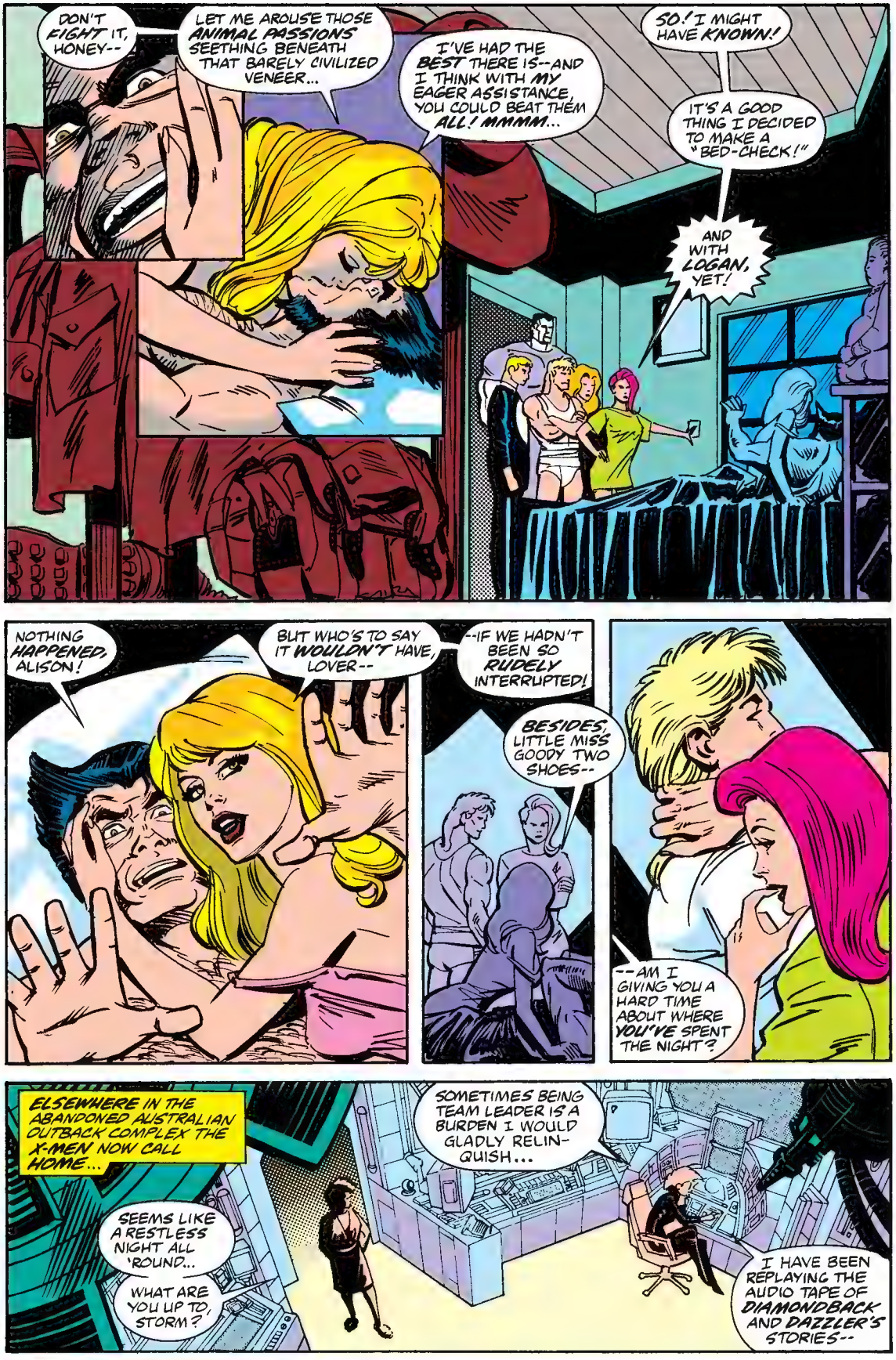
By Sally Pashkow, Jim Fern, & Joe Rubinstein

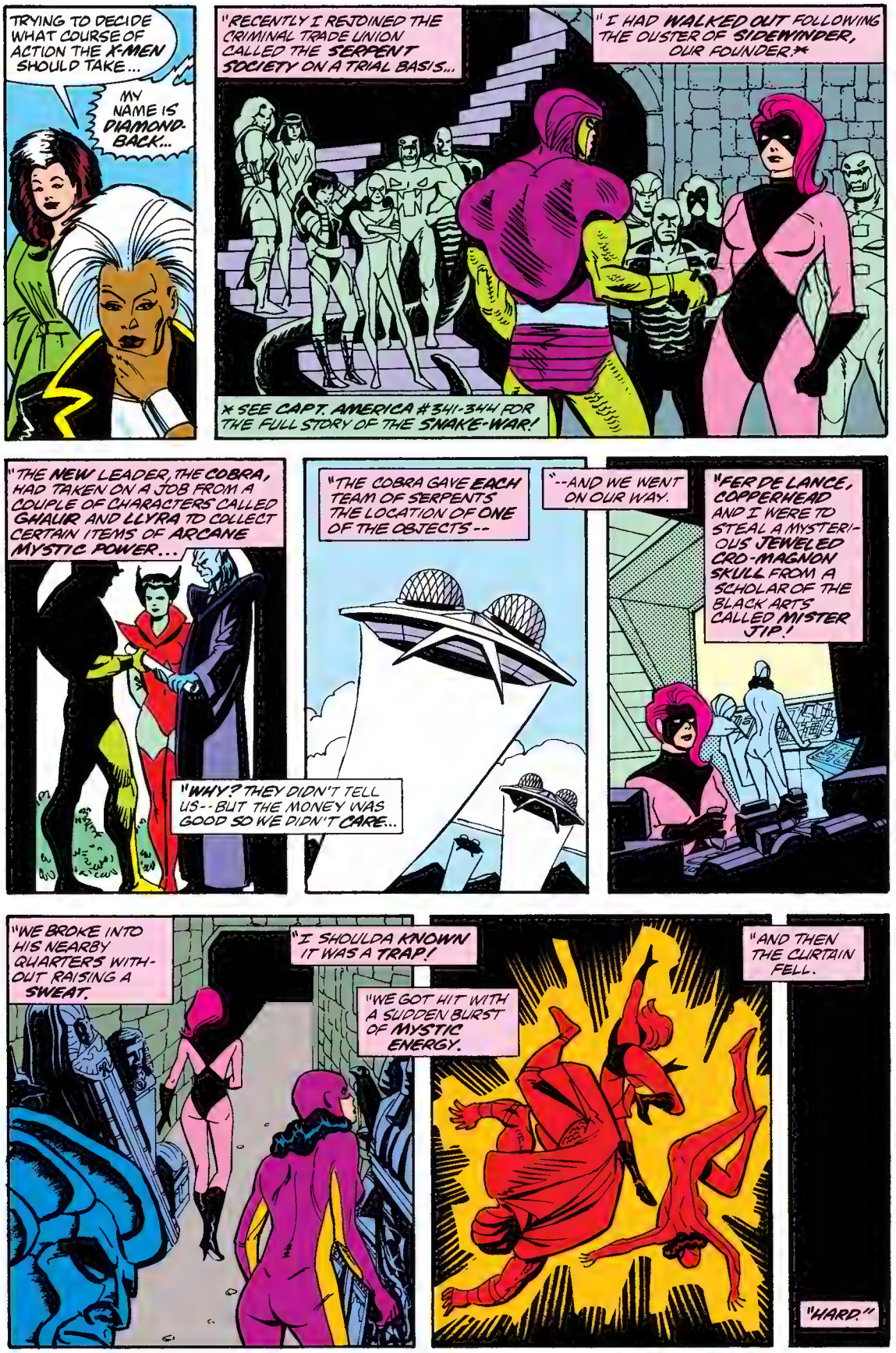
SAGA OF THE SERPENT CROWN: SERPENT IN THE GARDEN pg.58
By Peter Sanderson, Mark Bagley, & Keith Williams

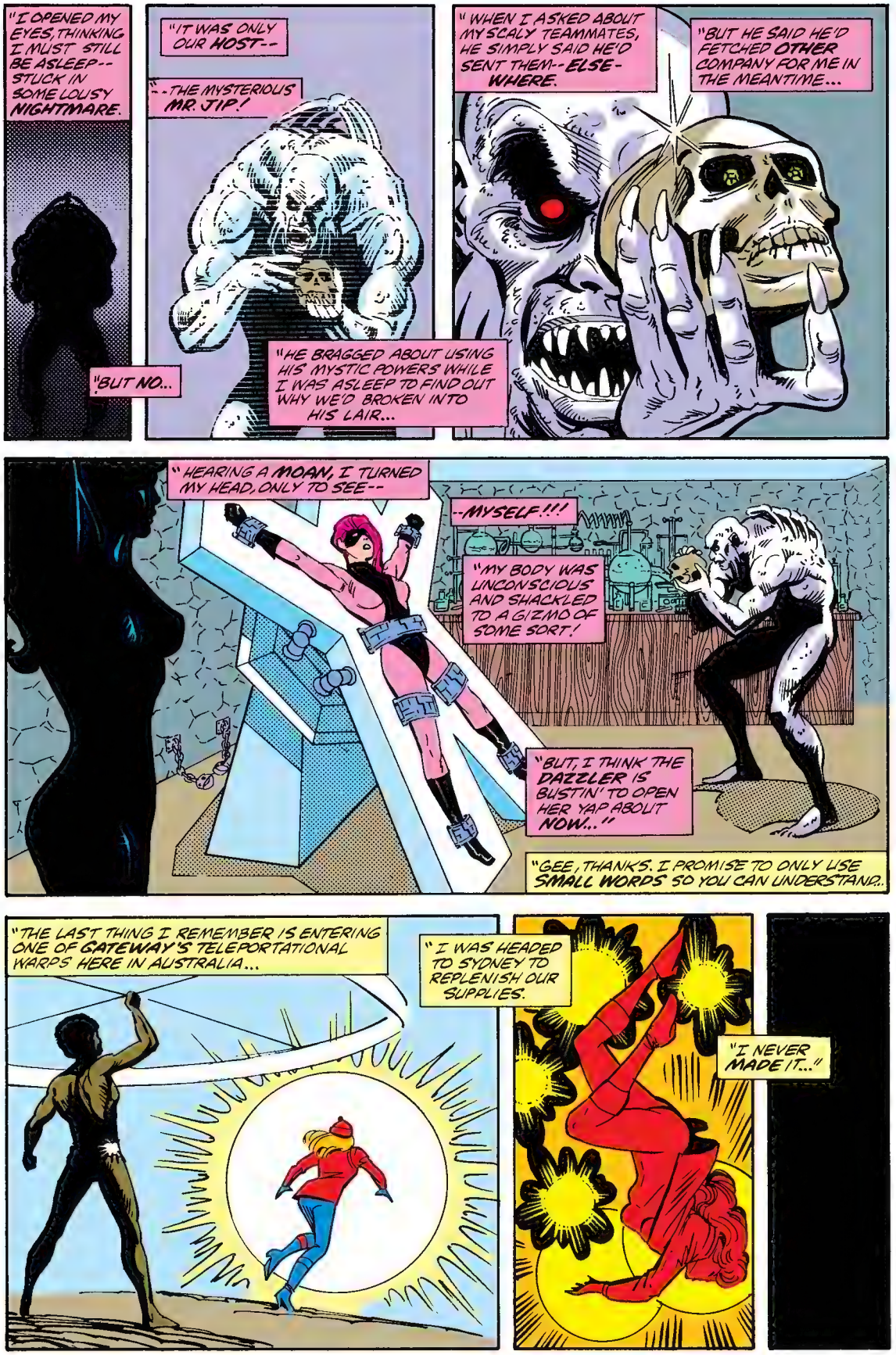
The story so far...

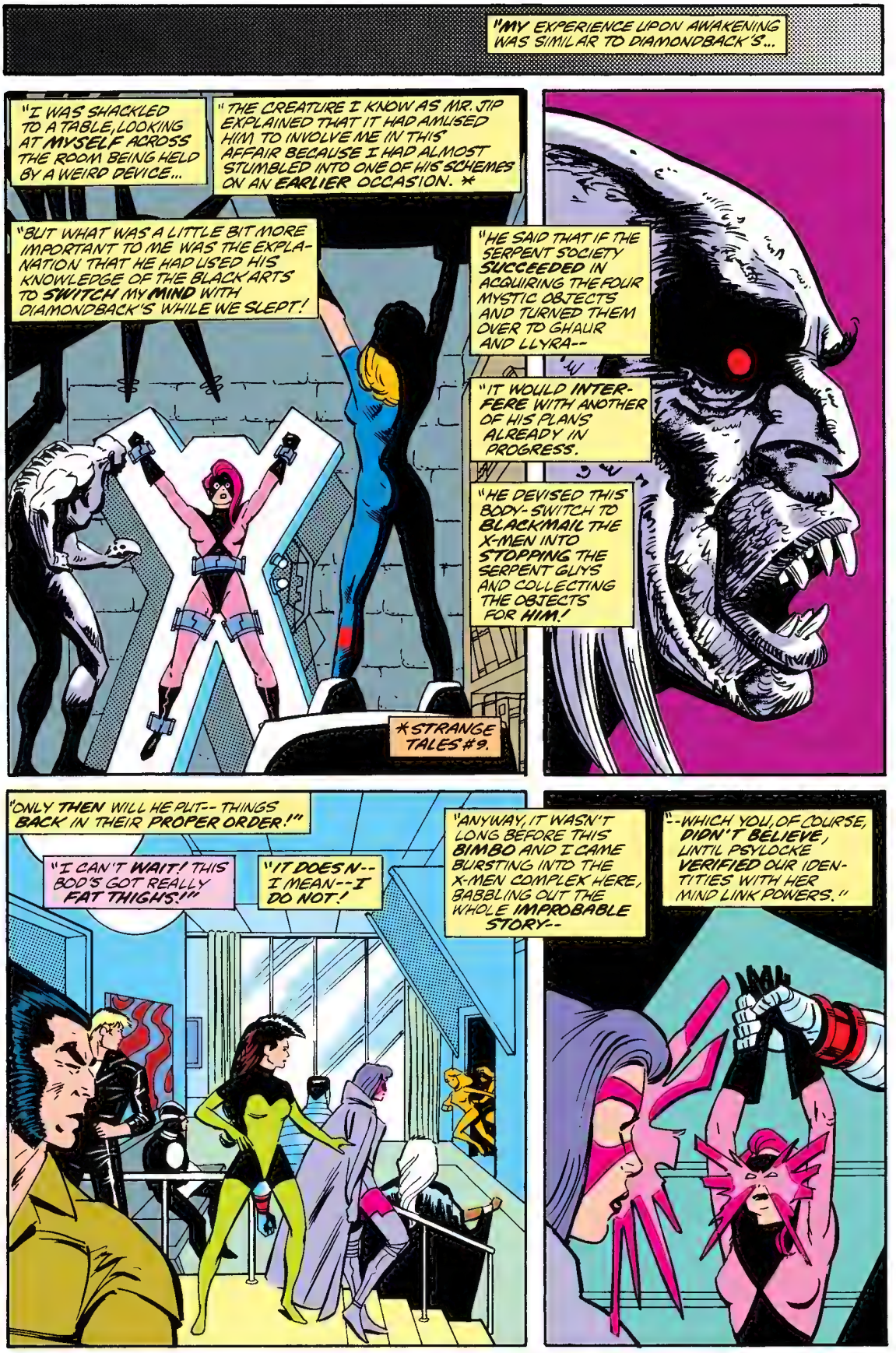
Freed from his deep space imprisonment, the Deviant High Priest, *Ghaur,* has returned to Earth to enlist the Lemurian rebel leader, *Llyra,* in his plan to rebuild the sinister Serpent Crown. The two form an alliance with Atlantean leaders, *Attuma* the Barbarian, and Warlord *Krang.* In order to pave the way for the Serpent God, *Set's* return to Earth, Ghaur proposes to use the combined forces of Atlantis, Lemurian rebels, and Deviants in an all-out undersea assault on the Surface World, beginning in the United States. Now, while the troops mass, the second step of Ghaur's plan is undertaken...

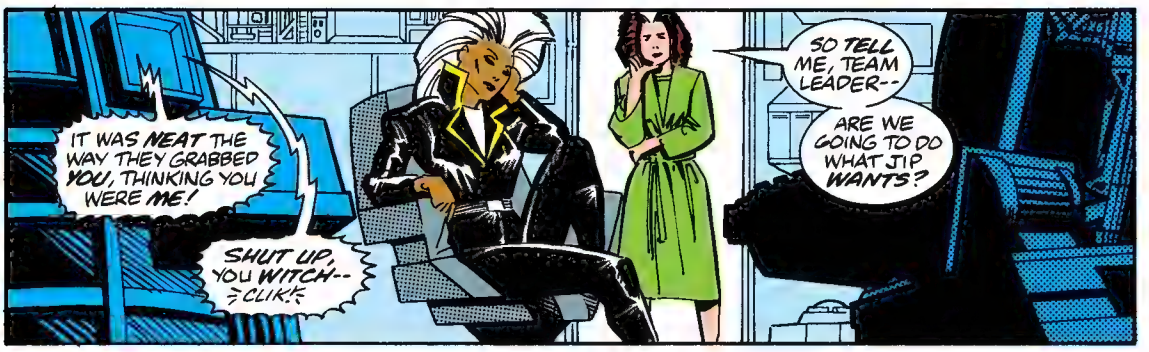

STAN LEE PRESENTS:
DOUBLE X CROSS
CHAPTER 1:
X-MEN HQ
JUST WHAT THE FLAMIN' HECK D'YOU THINK YOU'RE DOING?!
ISN'T IT OBVIOUS, BABY? SURELY YOU MUST HAVE SENSED IT BEFORE THIS.
I'VE WANTED YOU SINCE THE MOMENT I FIRST SET EYES ON YOU-- AND I MEAN TO HAVE YOU!
AN X-MEN X-TRAVAGANZA
BY
TERRY AUSTIN
WRITER
MIKE VOSBURG
ARTIST
TOM VINCENT
COLORIST
KEN LOPEZ
LETTERER
BOB HARRAS
EDITOR
TOM DEFALCO
EDITOR IN CHIEF

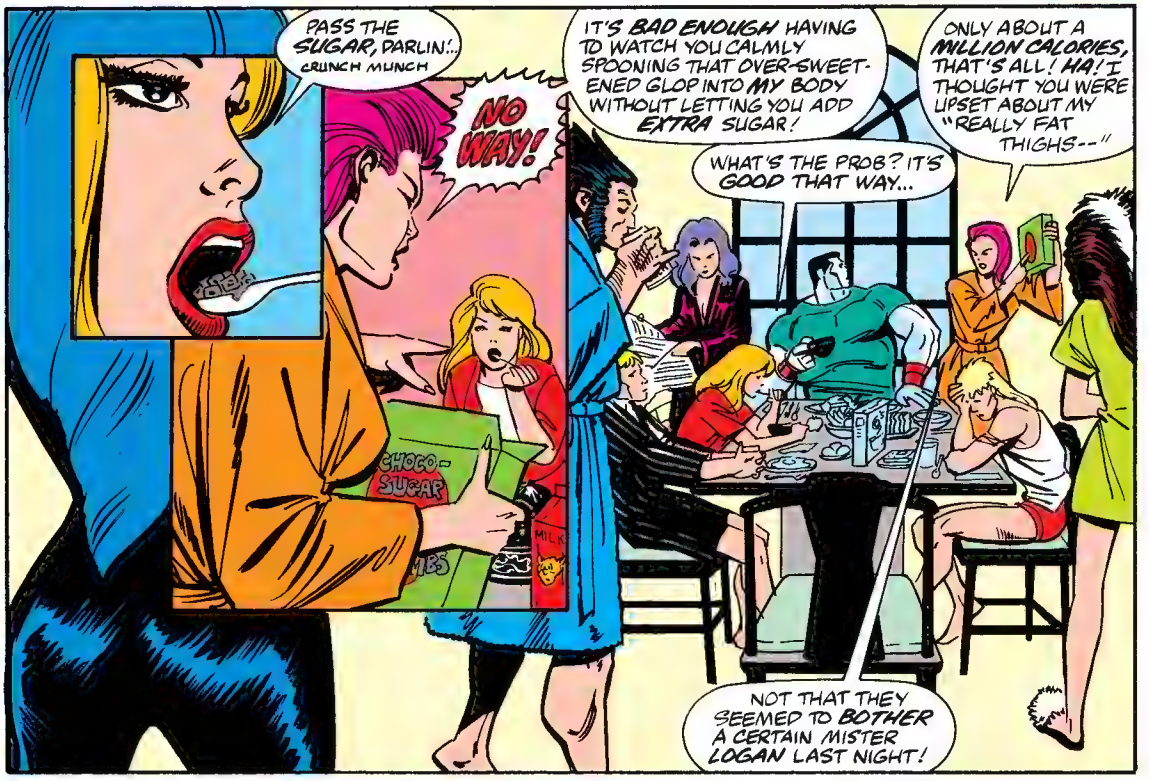

DON'T FIGHT IT, HONEY--
LET ME AROUSE THOSE ANIMAL PASSIONS SEETHING BENEATH THAT BARELY CIVILIZED VENEER...
I'VE HAD THE BEST THERE IS--AND I THINK WITH MY EAGER ASSISTANCE, YOU COULD BEAT THEM ALL! MMMM...
SO! I MIGHT HAVE KNOWN!
IT'S A GOOD THING I DECIDED TO MAKE A "BED-CHECK!"
AND WITH LOGAN, YET!
NOTHING HAPPENED, ALISON!
BUT WHO'S TO SAY IT WOULDN'T HAVE, LOVER--
--IF WE HADN'T BEEN SO RUDELY INTERRUPTED!
BESIDES, LITTLE MISS GOODY TWO SHOES--
--AM I GIVING YOU A HARD TIME ABOUT WHERE YOU'VE SPENT THE NIGHT?
ELSEWHERE IN THE ABANDONED AUSTRALIAN OUTBACK COMPLEX THE X-MEN NOW CALL HOME...
SEEMS LIKE A RESTLESS NIGHT ALL 'ROUND...
WHAT ARE YOU UP TO, STORM?
SOMETIMES BEING TEAM LEADER IS A BURDEN I WOULD GLADLY RELINQUISH...
I HAVE BEEN REPLAYING THE AUDIO TAPE OF DIAMONDBACK AND DAZZLER'S STORIES--


TRYING TO DECIDE WHAT COURSE OF ACTION THE X-MEN SHOULD TAKE...
MY NAME IS DIAMOND-BACK...
"RECENTLY I REJOINED THE CRIMINAL TRADE UNION CALLED THE SERPENT SOCIETY ON A TRIAL BASIS...
"I HAD WALKED OUT FOLLOWING THE OUSTER OF SIDEWINDER, OUR FOUNDER.*
* SEE CAPT. AMERICA #341-344 FOR THE FULL STORY OF THE SNAKE-WAR!
"THE NEW LEADER, THE COBRA, HAD TAKEN ON A JOB FROM A COUPLE OF CHARACTERS CALLED GHAUR AND LLYRA TO COLLECT CERTAIN ITEMS OF ARCANE MYSTIC POWER...
"WHY? THEY DIDN'T TELL US--BUT THE MONEY WAS GOOD SO WE DIDN'T CARE...
"THE COBRA GAVE EACH TEAM OF SERPENTS THE LOCATION OF ONE OF THE OBJECTS--
"--AND WE WENT ON OUR WAY.
"FER DE LANCE, COPPERHEAD AND I WERE TO STEAL A MYSTERIOUS JEWELED CRO-MAGNON SKULL FROM A SCHOLAR OF THE BLACK ARTS CALLED MISTER JIP!
"WE BROKE INTO HIS NEARBY QUARTERS WITHOUT RAISING A SWEAT.
"I SHOULDA KNOWN IT WAS A TRAP!
"WE GOT HIT WITH A SUDDEN BURST OF MYSTIC ENERGY.
"AND THEN THE CURTAIN FELL.
"HARD."

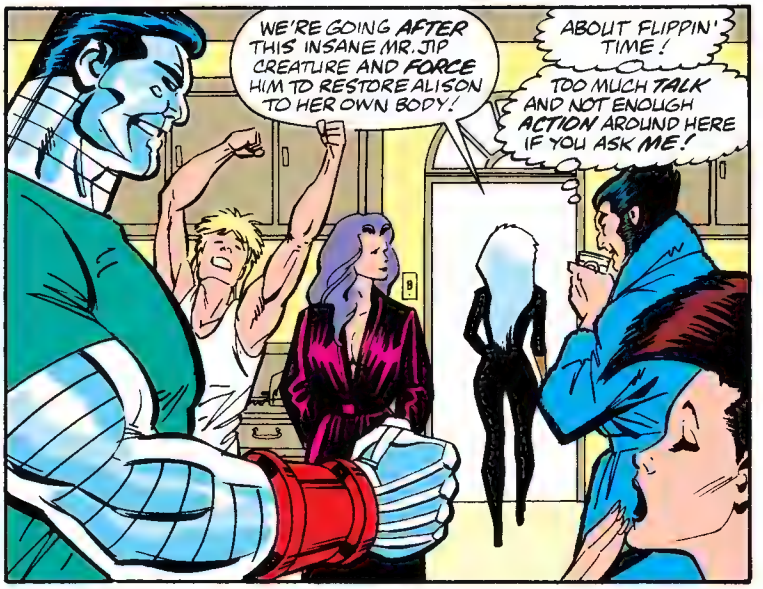

"I OPENED MY EYES, THINKING I MUST STILL BE ASLEEP-- STUCK IN SOME LOUSY NIGHTMARE.
"BUT NO...
"IT WAS ONLY OUR HOST--
"--THE MYSTERIOUS MR. JIP!
"HE BRAGGED ABOUT USING HIS MYSTIC POWERS WHILE I WAS ASLEEP TO FIND OUT WHY WE'D BROKEN INTO HIS LAIR...
"WHEN I ASKED ABOUT MY SCALY TEAMMATES, HE SIMPLY SAID HE'D SENT THEM-- ELSE-WHERE.
"BUT HE SAID HE'D FETCHED OTHER COMPANY FOR ME IN THE MEANTIME...
"HEARING A MOAN, I TURNED MY HEAD, ONLY TO SEE--
--MYSELF!!!
"MY BODY WAS UNCONSCIOUS AND SHACKLED TO A GIZMO OF SOME SORT!
"BUT, I THINK THE DAZZLER IS BUSTIN' TO OPEN HER YAP ABOUT NOW..."
"GEE, THANKS. I PROMISE TO ONLY USE SMALL WORDS SO YOU CAN UNDERSTAND..
"THE LAST THING I REMEMBER IS ENTERING ONE OF GATEWAY'S TELEPORTATIONAL WARPS HERE IN AUSTRALIA...
"I WAS HEADED TO SYDNEY TO REPLENISH OUR SUPPLIES.
"I NEVER MADE IT..."

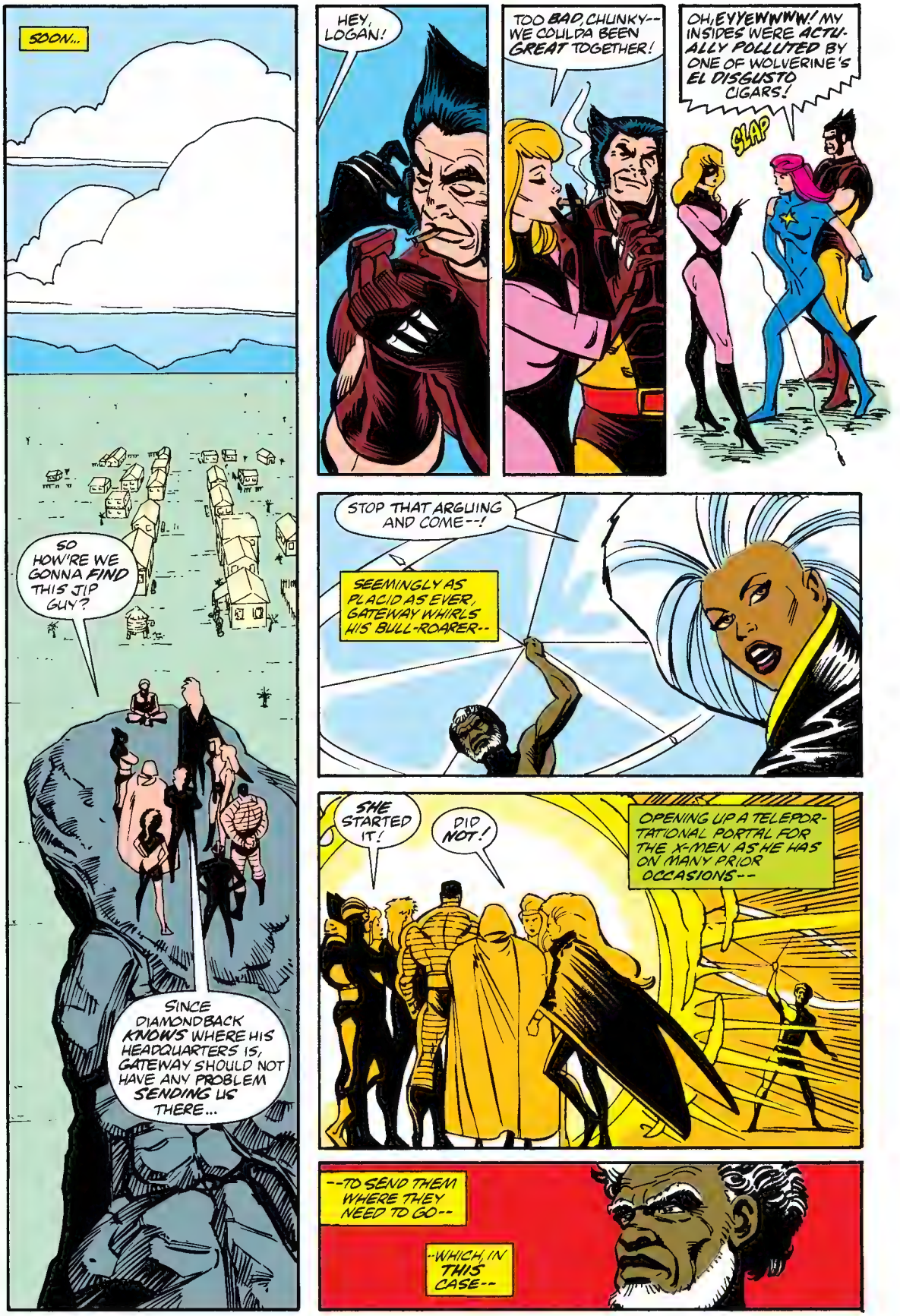

"MY EXPERIENCE UPON AWAKENING WAS SIMILAR TO DIAMONDBACK'S...
"I WAS SHACKLED TO A TABLE, LOOKING AT MYSELF ACROSS THE ROOM BEING HELD BY A WEIRD DEVICE...
"THE CREATURE I KNOW AS MR. JIP EXPLAINED THAT IT HAD AMUSED HIM TO INVOLVE ME IN THIS AFFAIR BECAUSE I HAD ALMOST STUMBLED INTO ONE OF HIS SCHEMES ON AN EARLIER OCCASION. *
"BUT WHAT WAS A LITTLE BIT MORE IMPORTANT TO ME WAS THE EXPLANATION THAT HE HAD USED HIS KNOWLEDGE OF THE BLACK ARTS TO SWITCH MY MIND WITH DIAMONDBACK'S WHILE WE SLEPT!
"HE SAID THAT IF THE SERPENT SOCIETY SUCCEEDED IN ACQUIRING THE FOUR MYSTIC OBJECTS AND TURNED THEM OVER TO GHAUR AND LLYRA--
"IT WOULD INTERFERE WITH ANOTHER OF HIS PLANS ALREADY IN PROGRESS.
"HE DEVISED THIS BODY-SWITCH TO BLACKMAIL THE X-MEN INTO STOPPING THE SERPENT GUYS AND COLLECTING THE OBJECTS FOR HIM!
* STRANGE TALES #9.
"ONLY THEN WILL HE PUT-- THINGS BACK IN THEIR PROPER ORDER!"
"I CAN'T WAIT! THIS BOD'S GOT REALLY FAT THIGHS!"
"IT DOES N-- I MEAN--I DO NOT!
"ANYWAY, IT WASN'T LONG BEFORE THIS BIMBO AND I CAME BURSTING INTO THE X-MEN COMPLEX HERE, BABBLING OUT THE WHOLE IMPROBABLE STORY--
"--WHICH YOU, OF COURSE, DIDN'T BELIEVE, UNTIL PSYLOCKE VERIFIED OUR IDENTITIES WITH HER MIND LINK POWERS."

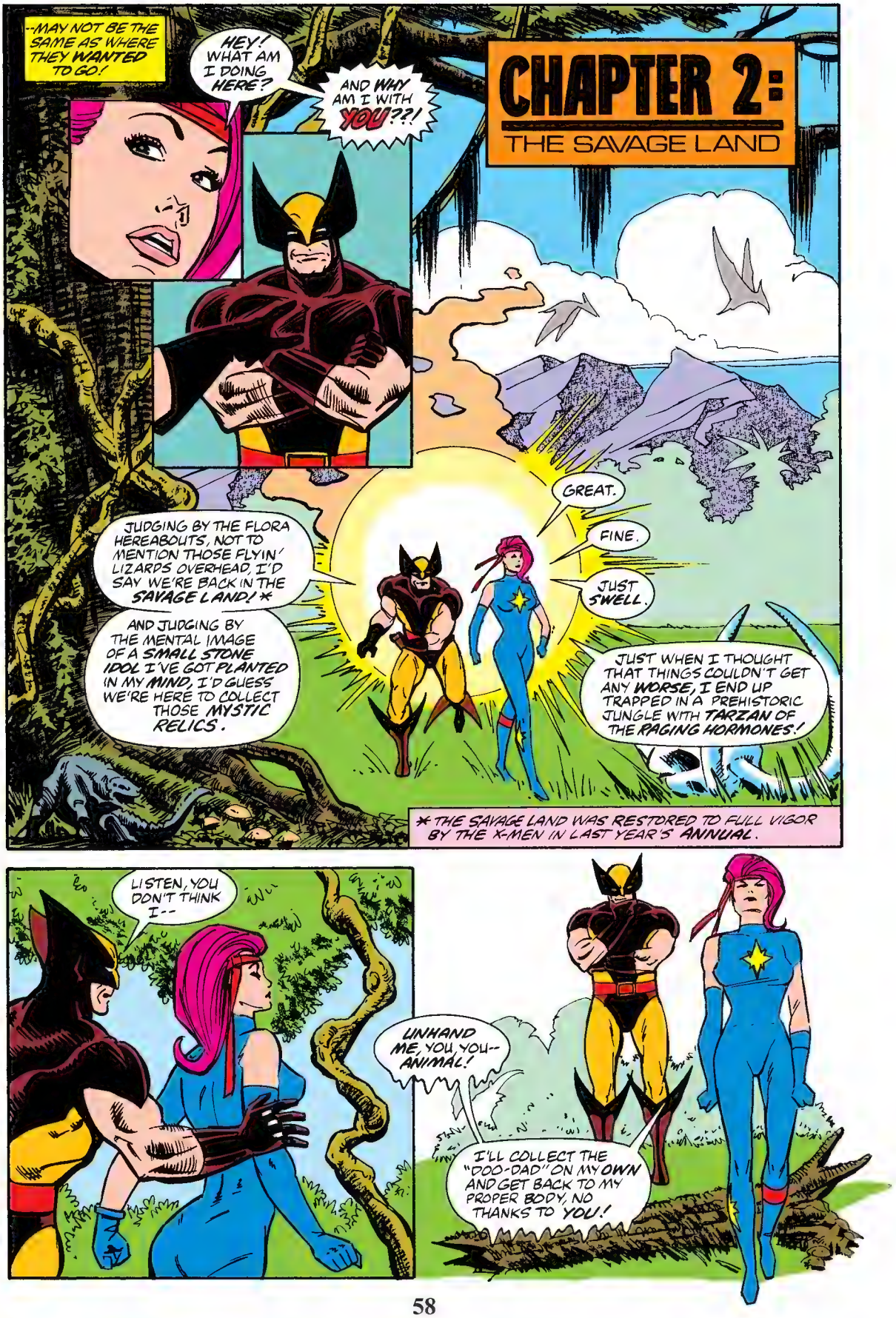

IT WAS NEAT THE WAY THEY GRABBED YOU, THINKING YOU WERE ME!
SHUT UP, YOU WITCH-- CLIK!
SO TELL ME, TEAM LEADER--
ARE WE GOING TO DO WHAT JIP WANTS?


PASS THE SUGAR, DARLIN'... CRUNCH MUNCH
NO WAY!
IT'S BAD ENOUGH HAVING TO WATCH YOU CALMLY SPOONING THAT OVER-SWEETENED GLOP INTO MY BODY WITHOUT LETTING YOU ADD EXTRA SUGAR!
ONLY ABOUT A MILLION CALORIES, THAT'S ALL! HA! I THOUGHT YOU WERE UPSET ABOUT MY "REALLY FAT THIGHS--"
WHAT'S THE PROB? IT'S GOOD THAT WAY...
CHOCO-SUGAR
MILK
NOT THAT THEY SEEMED TO BOTHER A CERTAIN MISTER LOGAN LAST NIGHT!

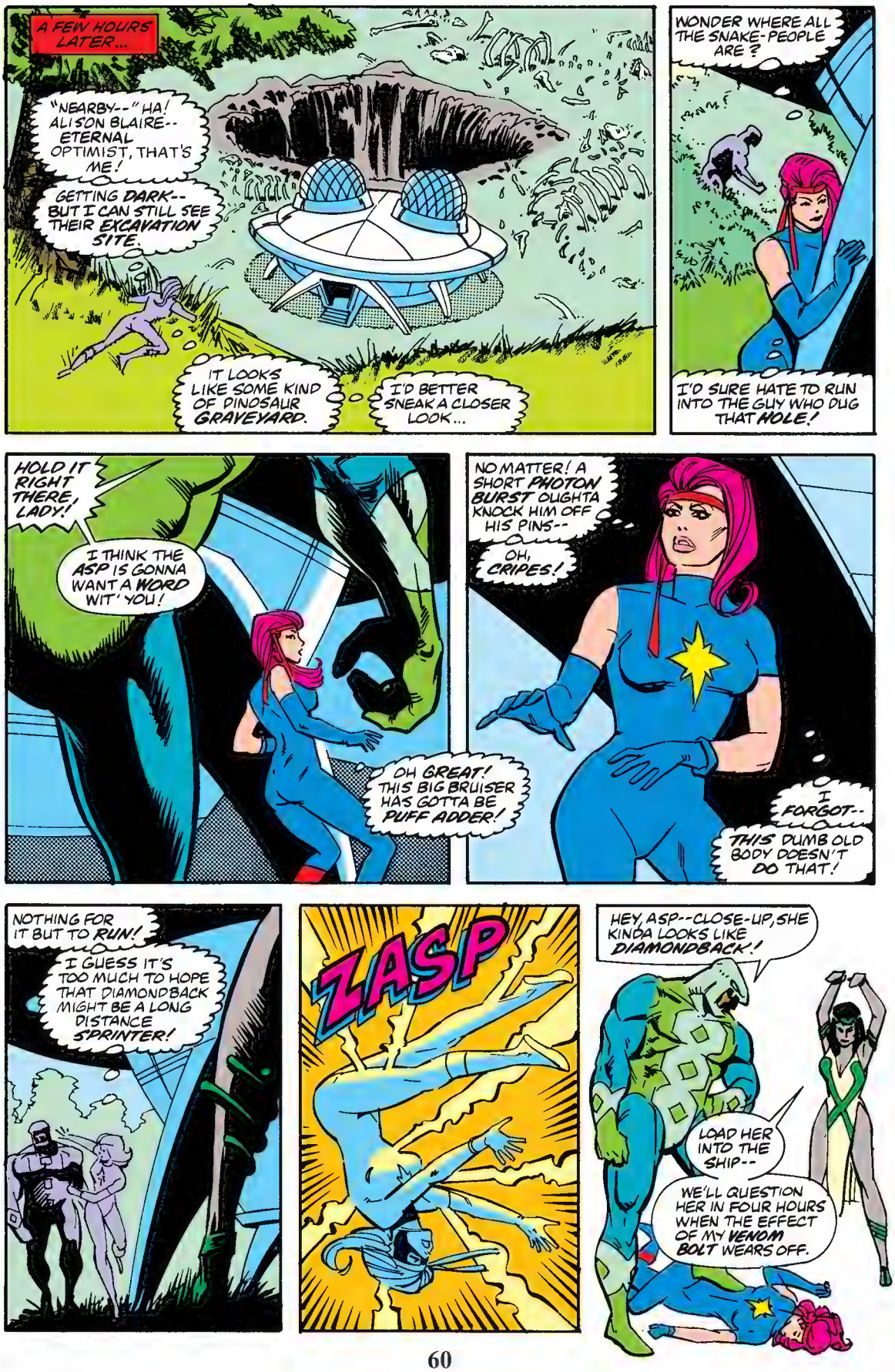
GET DRESSED-- ALL OF YOU!

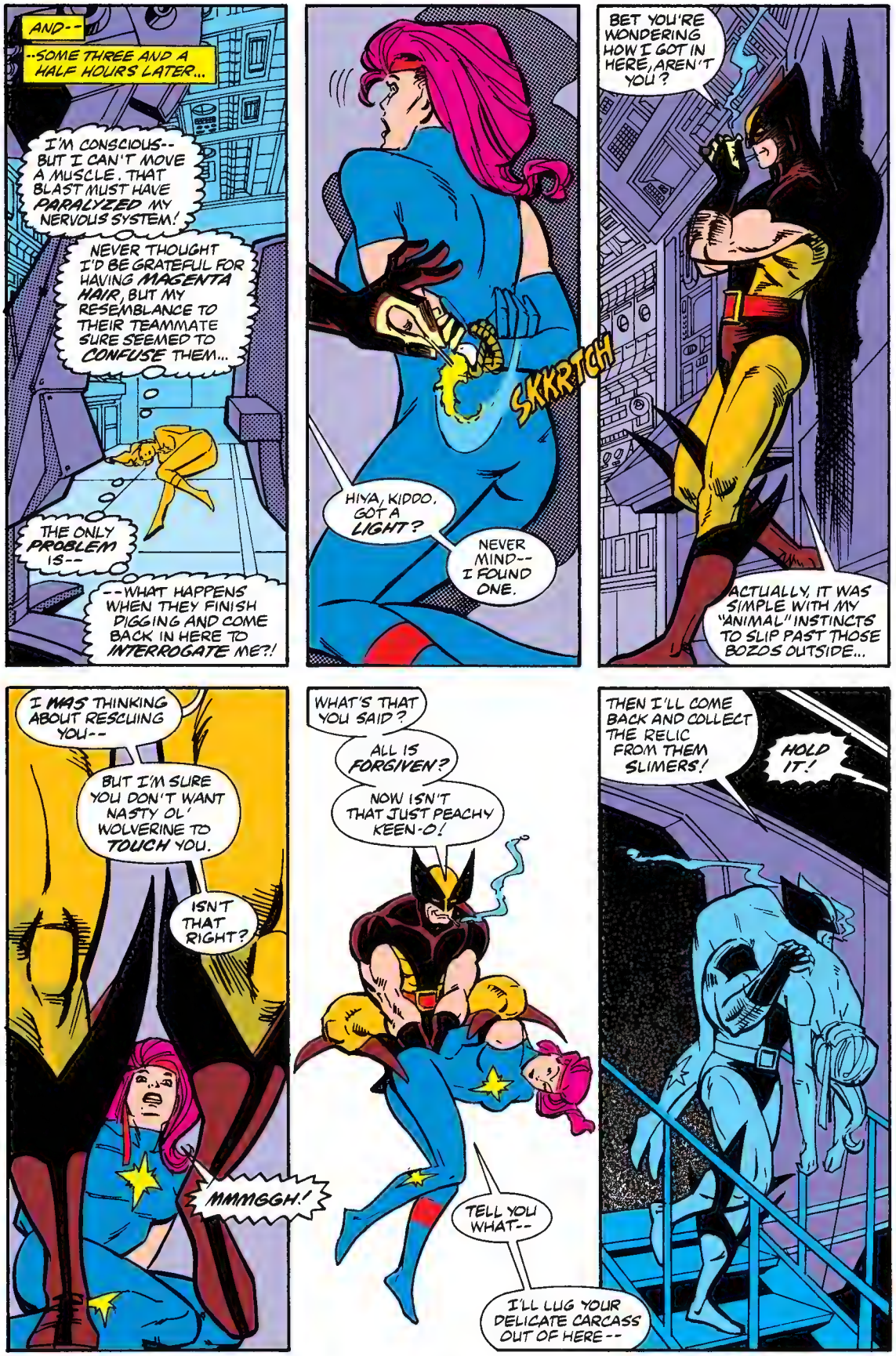

WE'RE GOING AFTER THIS INSANE MR. JIP CREATURE AND FORCE HIM TO RESTORE ALISON TO HER OWN BODY!
ABOUT FLIPPIN' TIME!
TOO MUCH TALK AND NOT ENOUGH ACTION AROUND HERE IF YOU ASK ME!

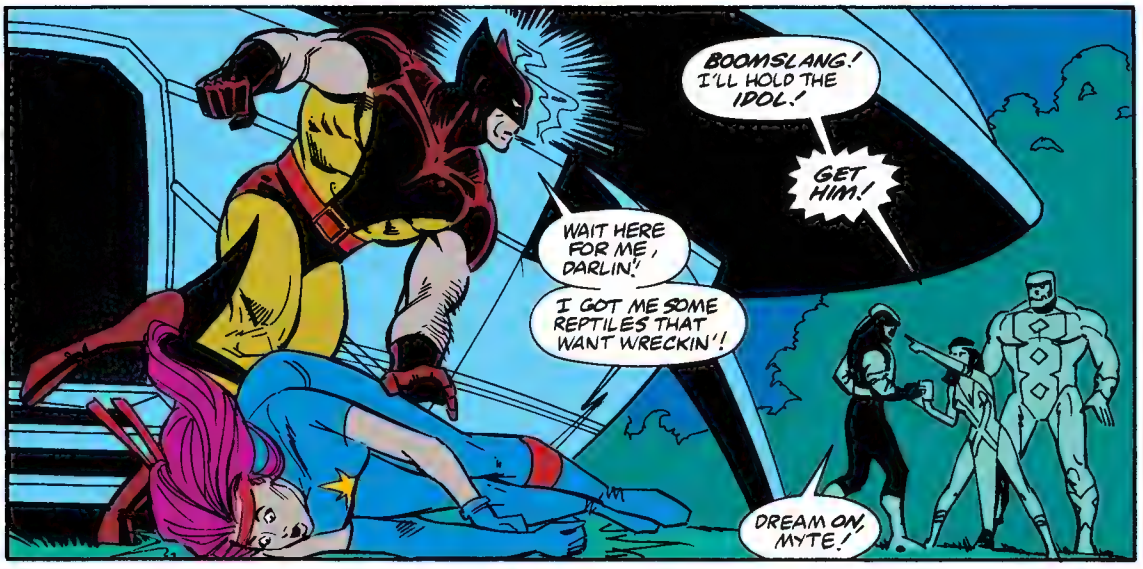

SOON...
SO HOW'RE WE GONNA FIND THIS JIP GUY?
SINCE DIAMONDBACK KNOWS WHERE HIS HEADQUARTERS IS, GATEWAY SHOULD NOT HAVE ANY PROBLEM SENDING US THERE...
HEY, LOGAN!
TOO BAD, CHUNKY-- WE COULDA BEEN GREAT TOGETHER!
OH, EYYEWWWW! MY INSIDES WERE ACTUALLY POLLUTED BY ONE OF WOLVERINE'S EL DISGUSTO CIGARS!
SLAP
STOP THAT ARGUING AND COME--!
SEEMINGLY AS PLACID AS EVER, GATEWAY WHIRLS HIS BULL-ROARER--
SHE STARTED IT!
DID NOT!
OPENING UP A TELEPORTATIONAL PORTAL FOR THE X-MEN AS HE HAS ON MANY PRIOR OCCASIONS--
--TO SEND THEM WHERE THEY NEED TO GO--
--WHICH, IN THIS CASE--


--MAY NOT BE THE SAME AS WHERE THEY WANTED TO GO!
HEY! WHAT AM I DOING HERE?
AND WHY AM I WITH YOU??!
CHAPTER 2:
THE SAVAGE LAND
JUDGING BY THE FLORA HEREABOUTS, NOT TO MENTION THOSE FLYIN' LIZARDS OVERHEAD, I'D SAY WE'RE BACK IN THE SAVAGE LAND! *
AND JUDGING BY THE MENTAL IMAGE OF A SMALL STONE IDOL I'VE GOT PLANTED IN MY MIND, I'D GUESS WE'RE HERE TO COLLECT THOSE MYSTIC RELICS.
GREAT.
FINE.
JUST SWELL.
JUST WHEN I THOUGHT THAT THINGS COULDN'T GET ANY WORSE, I END UP TRAPPED IN A PREHISTORIC JUNGLE WITH TARZAN OF THE RAGING HORMONES!
* THE SAVAGE LAND WAS RESTORED TO FULL VIGOR BY THE X-MEN IN LAST YEAR'S ANNUAL.
LISTEN, YOU DON'T THINK I--
UNHAND ME, YOU, YOU-- ANIMAL!
I'LL COLLECT THE "DOO-DAD" ON MY OWN AND GET BACK TO MY PROPER BODY, NO THANKS TO YOU!

THAT'S TELLIN' HIM, ALISON!
I'VE GOT THE SAME STRANGE MENTAL PICTURE OF THE IDOL IN MY HEAD, SO I GUESS I DON'T NEED MISTER MACHO'S HELP TO FIND THE THING...
NOW IF I ONLY KNEW WHERE TO LOOK--!
WHOOOA!
GUESS I SCARED THEM WORSE'N THEY SCARED ME--
I'D BETTER SIMMER DOWN--
SPEAKING OF WHICH--
--BEFORE I ACCIDENTALLY END UP AS A NICE DINOSAUR DINNER!
I WONDER IF THESE GUYS ARE MEAT EATERS?
WAIT! SOMETHING'S SPOOKING THEM!
THAT SOUND!
WOO-EEE! THAT'S WHAT I CALL A TIMELY INTERRUPTION!
THAT'S GOT TO BE ONE OF THOSE SERPENT SAUCERS THAT DIAMOND-BIMBO MENTIONED--
IT'S COMING IN LOW--
MUST BE LANDING NEARBY--
I HOPE!

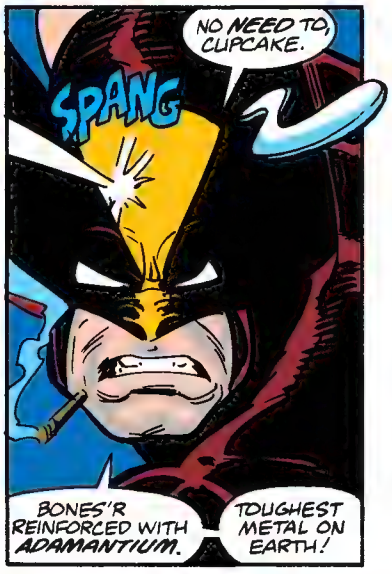

A FEW HOURS LATER...
"NEARBY--" HA! ALISON BLAIRE--ETERNAL OPTIMIST, THAT'S ME!
GETTING DARK--BUT I CAN STILL SEE THEIR EXCAVATION SITE.
IT LOOKS LIKE SOME KIND OF DINOSAUR GRAVEYARD.
I'D BETTER SNEAK A CLOSER LOOK...
WONDER WHERE ALL THE SNAKE-PEOPLE ARE?
I'D SURE HATE TO RUN INTO THE GUY WHO DUG THAT HOLE!
HOLD IT RIGHT THERE, LADY!
I THINK THE ASP IS GONNA WANT A WORD WIT' YOU!
OH GREAT! THIS BIG BRUISER HAS GOTTA BE PUFF ADDER!
NO MATTER! A SHORT PHOTON BURST OUGHTA KNOCK HIM OFF HIS PINS--
OH, CRIPES!
I FORGOT--
THIS DUMB OLD BODY DOESN'T DO THAT!
NOTHING FOR IT BUT TO RUN!
I GUESS IT'S TOO MUCH TO HOPE THAT DIAMONDBACK MIGHT BE A LONG DISTANCE SPRINTER!
ZASP
HEY, ASP--CLOSE-UP, SHE KINDA LOOKS LIKE DIAMONDBACK!
LOAD HER INTO THE SHIP--
WE'LL QUESTION HER IN FOUR HOURS WHEN THE EFFECT OF MY VENOM BOLT WEARS OFF.

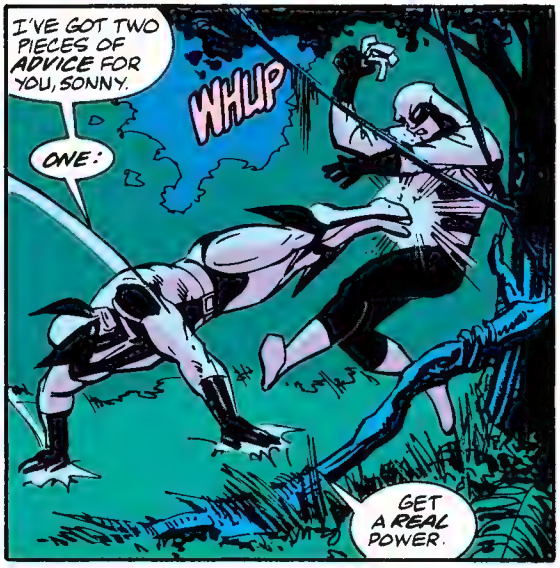

AND--
--SOME THREE AND A HALF HOURS LATER...
I'M CONSCIOUS-- BUT I CAN'T MOVE A MUSCLE. THAT BLAST MUST HAVE PARALYZED MY NERVOUS SYSTEM!
NEVER THOUGHT I'D BE GRATEFUL FOR HAVING MAGENTA HAIR, BUT MY RESEMBLANCE TO THEIR TEAMMATE SURE SEEMED TO CONFUSE THEM...
THE ONLY PROBLEM IS--
--WHAT HAPPENS WHEN THEY FINISH DIGGING AND COME BACK IN HERE TO INTERROGATE ME?!
SKKRTCH
HIYA, KIDDO. GOT A LIGHT?
NEVER MIND-- I FOUND ONE.
BET YOU'RE WONDERING HOW I GOT IN HERE, AREN'T YOU?
ACTUALLY, IT WAS SIMPLE WITH MY "ANIMAL" INSTINCTS TO SLIP PAST THOSE BOZOS OUTSIDE...
I WAS THINKING ABOUT RESCUING YOU--
BUT I'M SURE YOU DON'T WANT NASTY OL' WOLVERINE TO TOUCH YOU.
ISN'T THAT RIGHT?
MMMGGH!
WHAT'S THAT YOU SAID?
ALL IS FORGIVEN?
NOW ISN'T THAT JUST PEACHY KEEN-O!
TELL YOU WHAT--
I'LL LUG YOUR DELICATE CARCASS OUT OF HERE--
THEN I'LL COME BACK AND COLLECT THE RELIC FROM THEM SLIMERS!
HOLD IT!


BOOMSLANG! I'LL HOLD THE IDOL!
GET HIM!
WAIT HERE FOR ME, DARLIN'!
I GOT ME SOME REPTILES THAT WANT WRECKIN'!
DREAM ON, MYTE!

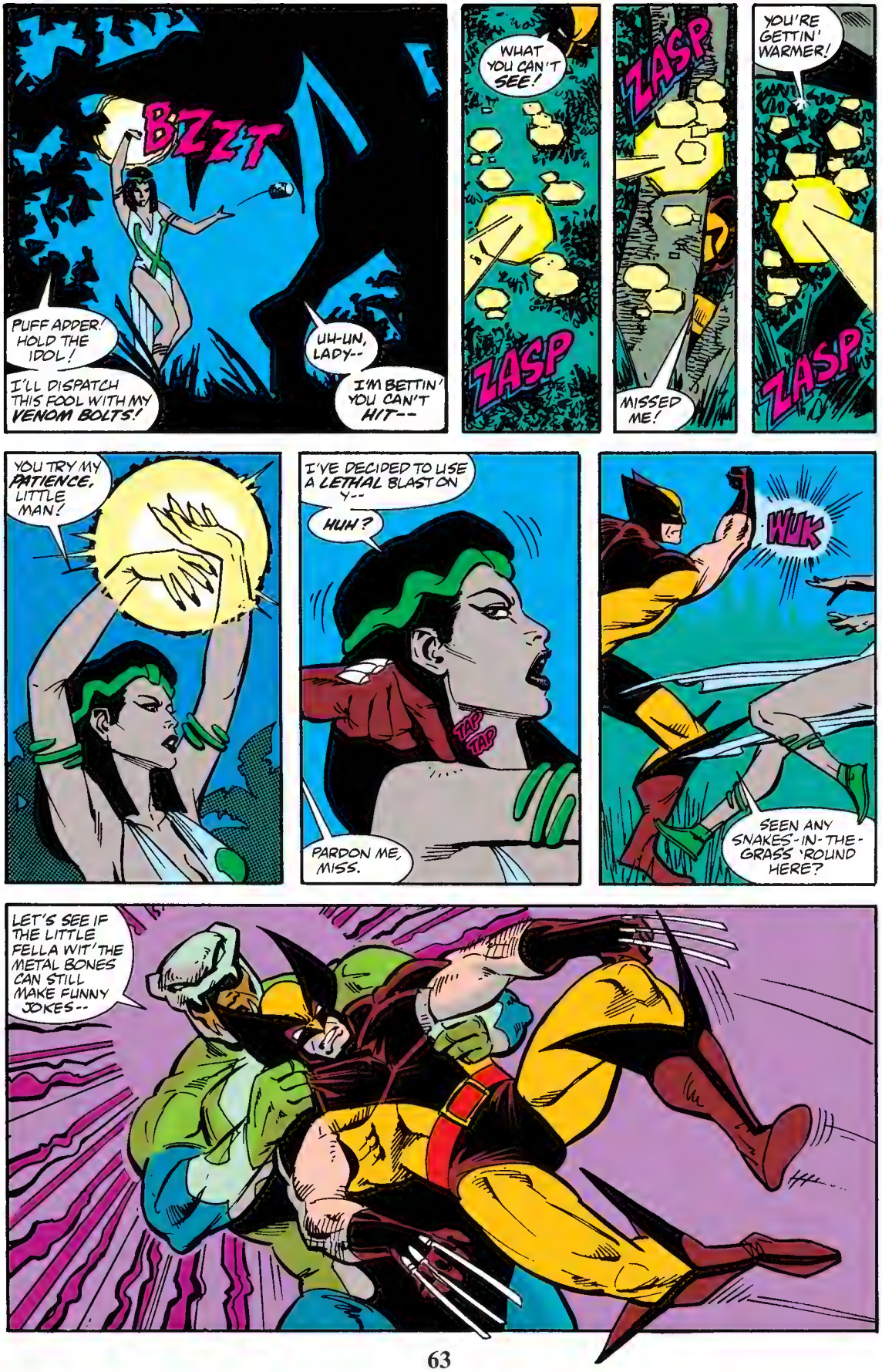
IF THERE'S ANY WRECKIN' T' BE DONE 'EREABOUTS--
--IT'LL BE ME SERPENT-RANGS WHAT DO IT!

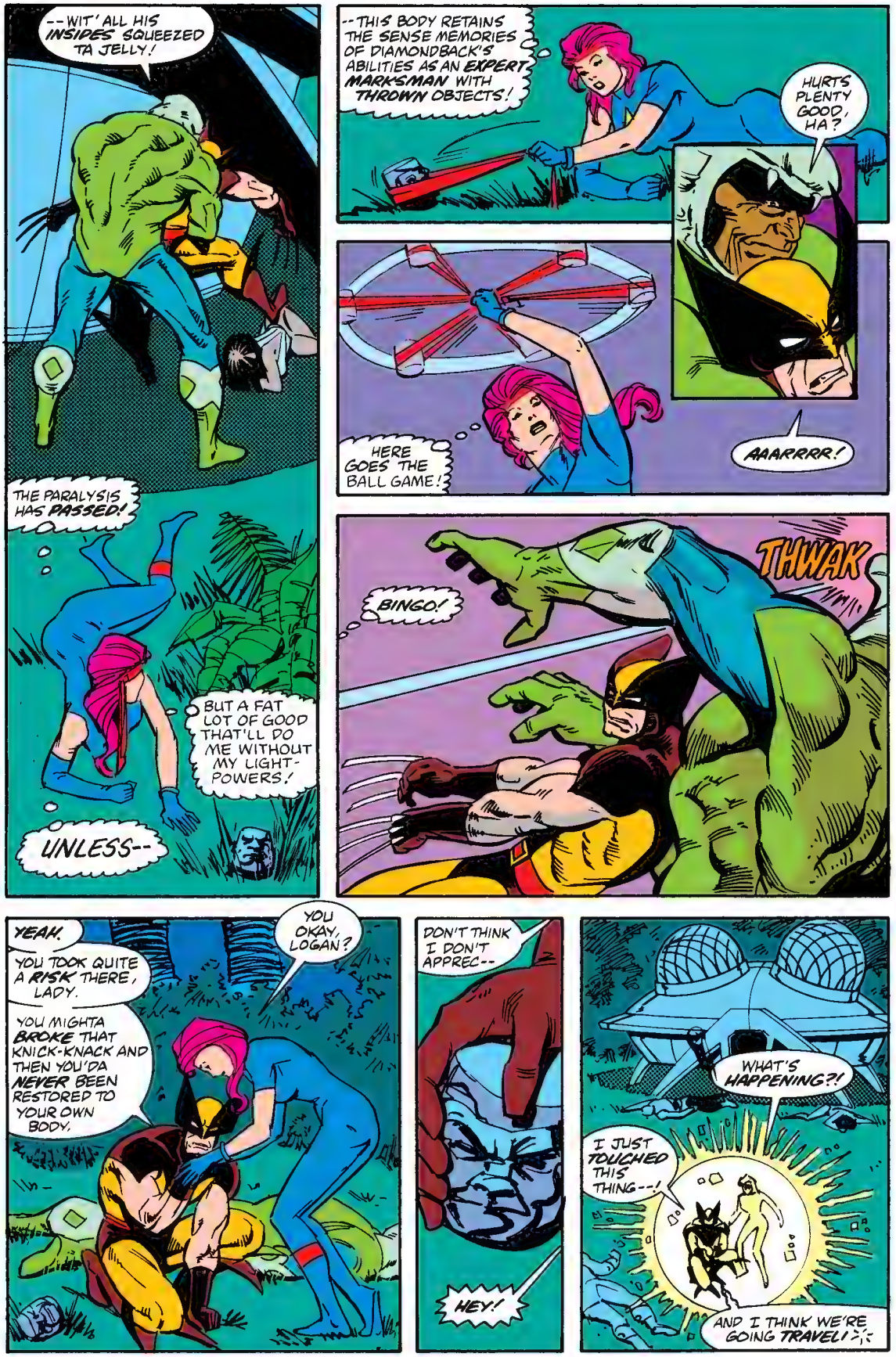
SPAK
SPAK
HAR! PRETTY FAIR GO FOR A BLOODY YANK WANKER!
BUT Y'CAN'T KEEP DODGIN' FOREVER, I'M BETTIN'!

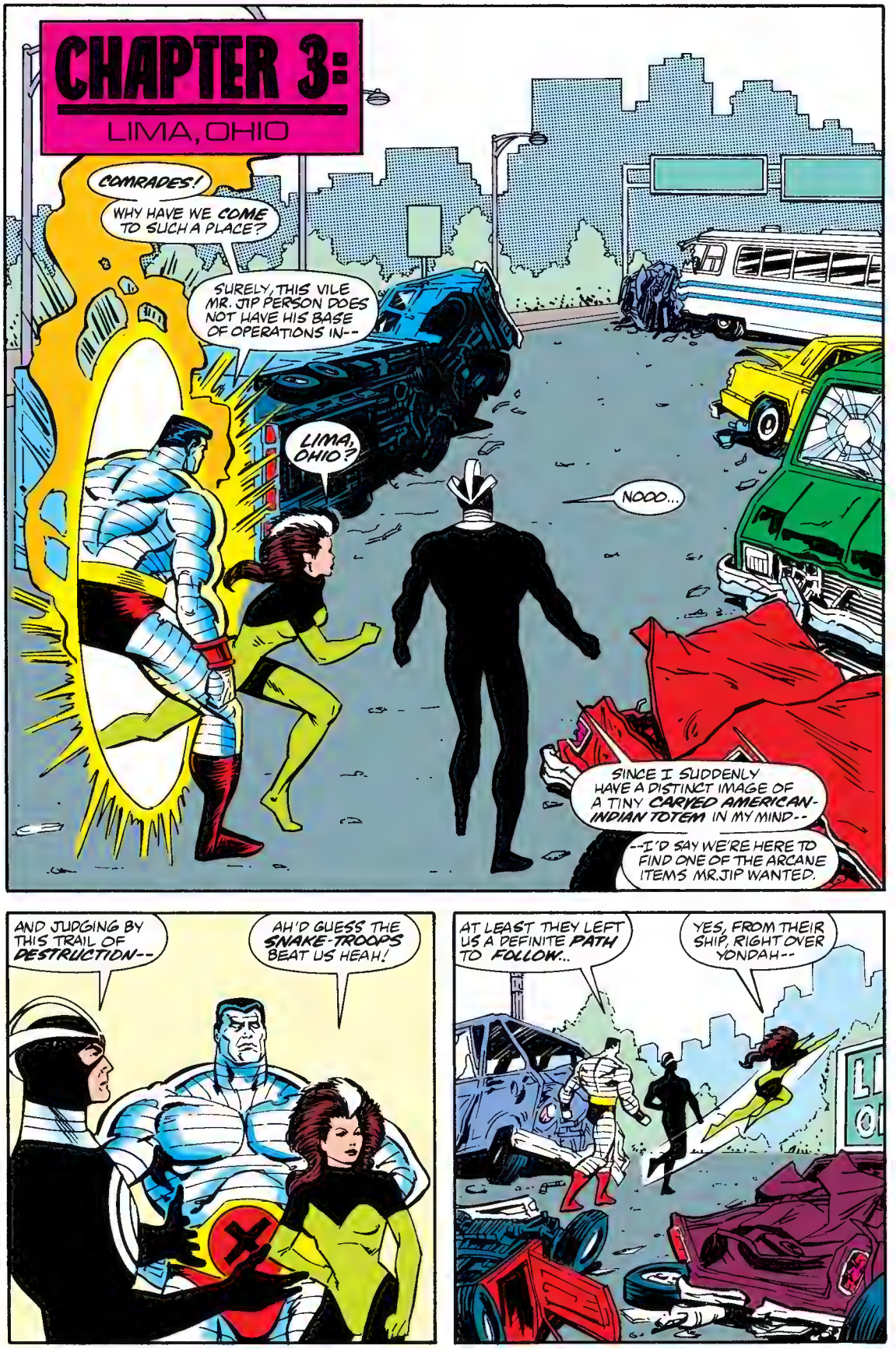

NO NEED TO, CUPCAKE.
SPANG
BONES'R REINFORCED WITH ADAMANTIUM.
TOUGHEST METAL ON EARTH!


I'VE GOT TWO PIECES OF ADVICE FOR YOU, SONNY.
ONE:
WHUP
GET A REAL POWER.

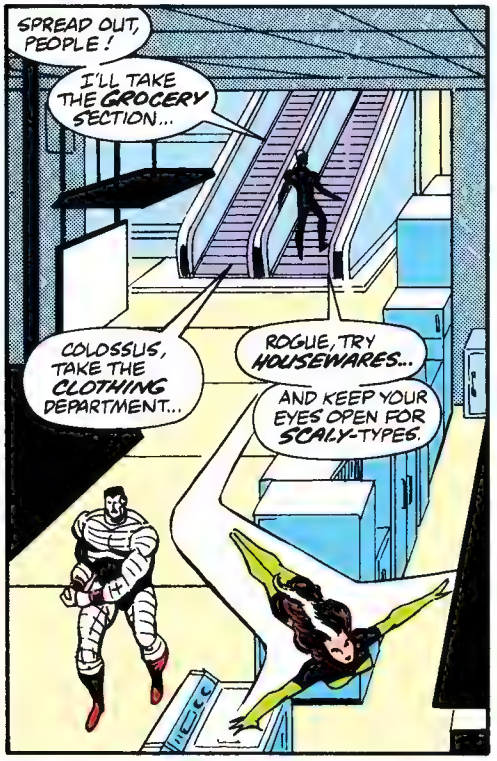
TWO:
WAK
LOSE THE STUPID ACCENT!

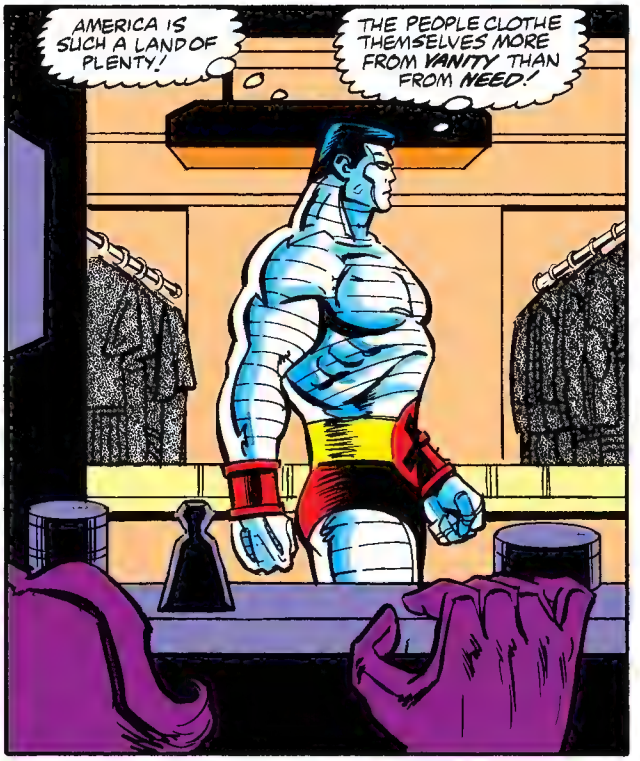

BZZT
PUFF ADDER! HOLD THE IDOL!
I'LL DISPATCH THIS FOOL WITH MY VENOM BOLTS!
UH-UH, LADY--
I'M BETTIN' YOU CAN'T HIT--
WHAT YOU CAN'T SEE!
ZASP
ZASP
MISSED ME!
YOU'RE GETTIN' WARMER!
ZASP
YOU TRY MY PATIENCE, LITTLE MAN!
I'VE DECIDED TO USE A LETHAL BLAST ON Y--
HUH?
TAP TAP
PARDON ME, MISS.
WUK
SEEN ANY SNAKES-IN-THE-GRASS 'ROUND HERE?
LET'S SEE IF THE LITTLE FELLA WIT' THE METAL BONES CAN STILL MAKE FUNNY JOKES--

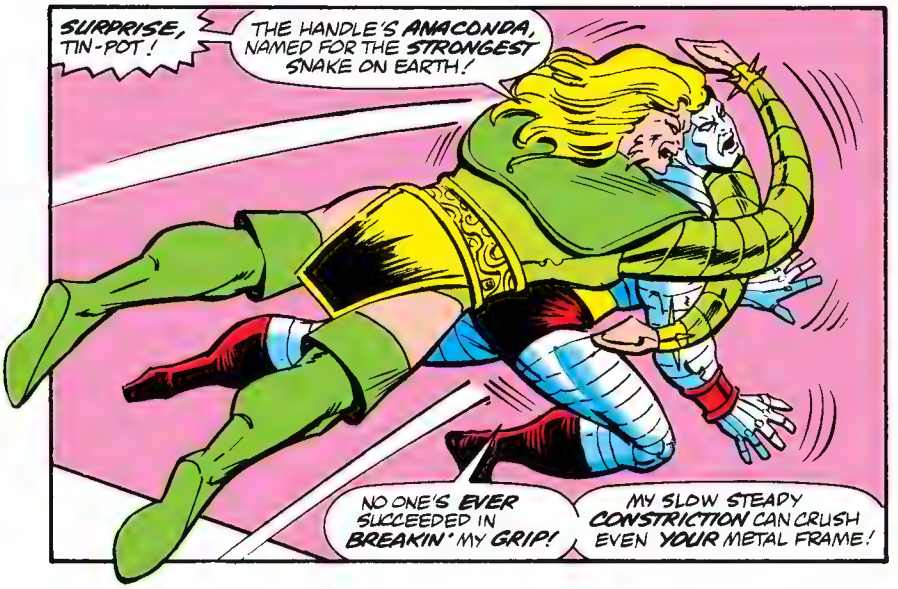

--WIT' ALL HIS INSIDES SQUEEZED TA JELLY!
--THIS BODY RETAINS THE SENSE MEMORIES OF DIAMONDBACK'S ABILITIES AS AN EXPERT MARKSMAN WITH THROWN OBJECTS!
HURTS PLENTY GOOD, HA?
HERE GOES THE BALL GAME!
AAARRRR!
THE PARALYSIS HAS PASSED!
BUT A FAT LOT OF GOOD THAT'LL DO ME WITHOUT MY LIGHT-POWERS!
UNLESS--
BINGO!
THWAK
YEAH.
YOU TOOK QUITE A RISK THERE, LADY.
YOU MIGHTA BROKE THAT KNICK-KNACK AND THEN YOU'DA NEVER BEEN RESTORED TO YOUR OWN BODY.
YOU OKAY, LOGAN?
DON'T THINK I DON'T APPREC--
HEY!
WHAT'S HAPPENING?!
I JUST TOUCHED THIS THING--!
AND I THINK WE'RE GOING TRAVEL!


CHAPTER 3:
LIMA, OHIO
COMRADES!
WHY HAVE WE COME TO SUCH A PLACE?
SURELY, THIS VILE MR. JIP PERSON DOES NOT HAVE HIS BASE OF OPERATIONS IN--
LIMA, OHIO?
NOOO...
SINCE I SUDDENLY HAVE A DISTINCT IMAGE OF A TINY CARVED AMERICAN-INDIAN TOTEM IN MY MIND--
--I'D SAY WE'RE HERE TO FIND ONE OF THE ARCANE ITEMS MR. JIP WANTED.
AND JUDGING BY THIS TRAIL OF DESTRUCTION--
AH'D GUESS THE SNAKE-TROOPS BEAT US HEAH!
AT LEAST THEY LEFT US A DEFINITE PATH TO FOLLOW...
YES, FROM THEIR SHIP, RIGHT OVER YONDAH--

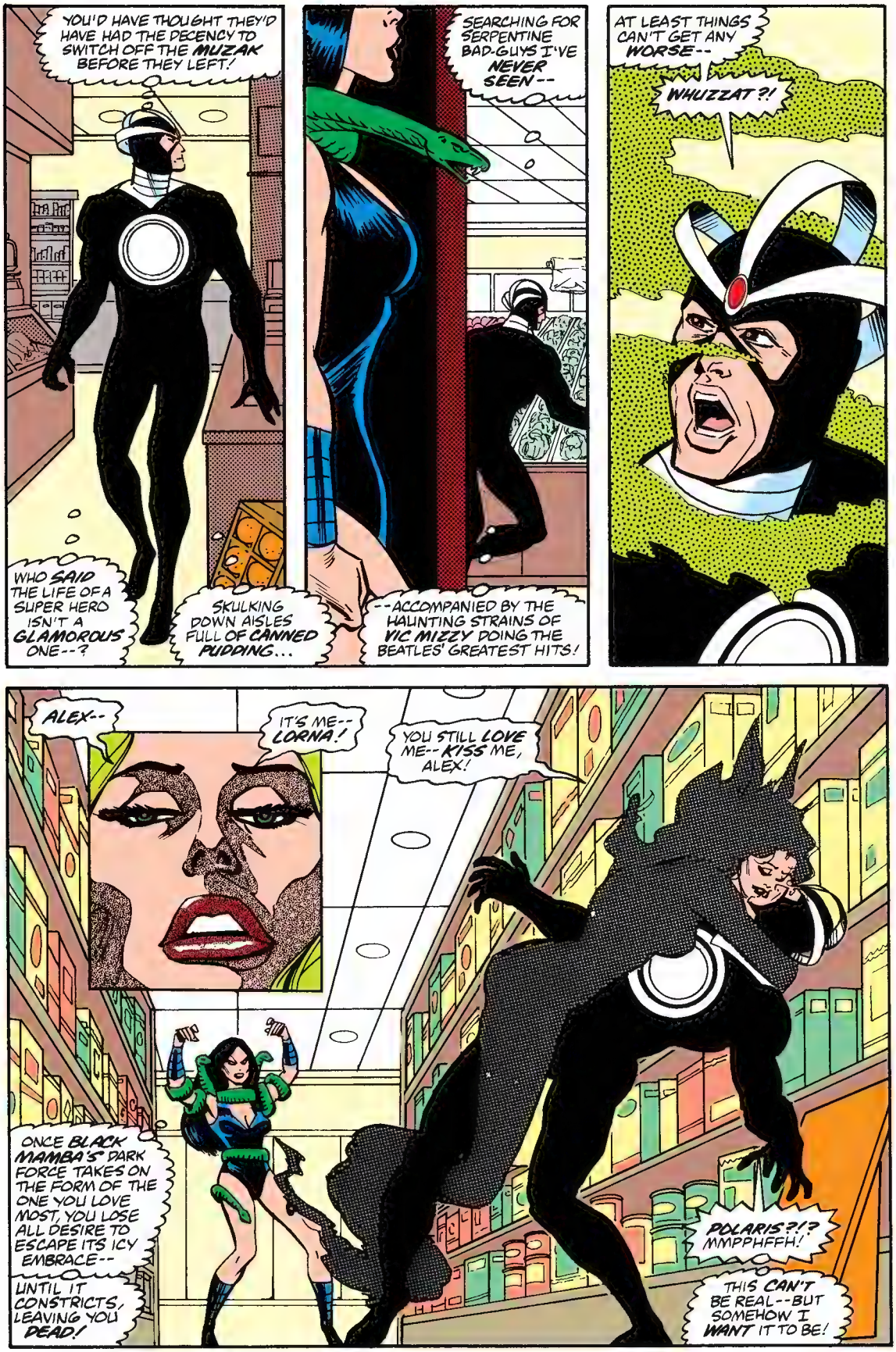
--TO THIS SHOPPIN' CENTAH!
EMPTY! OBVIOUSLY IT DIDN'T TAKE LONG FOR THE LOCALS TO EVACUATE THE AREA!

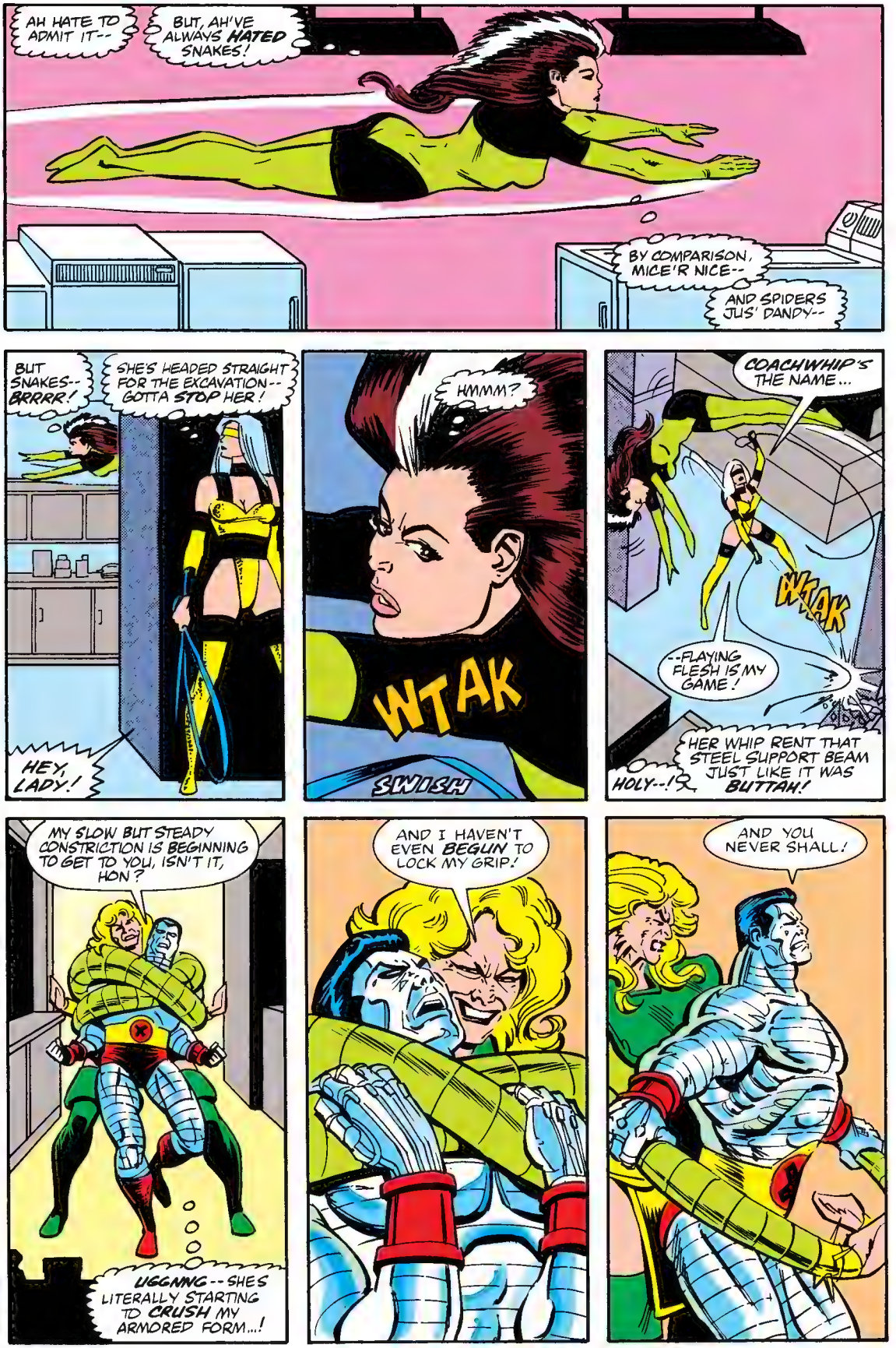

SPREAD OUT, PEOPLE!
I'LL TAKE THE GROCERY SECTION...
COLOSSUS, TAKE THE CLOTHING DEPARTMENT...
ROGUE, TRY HOUSEWARES...
AND KEEP YOUR EYES OPEN FOR SCALY-TYPES.

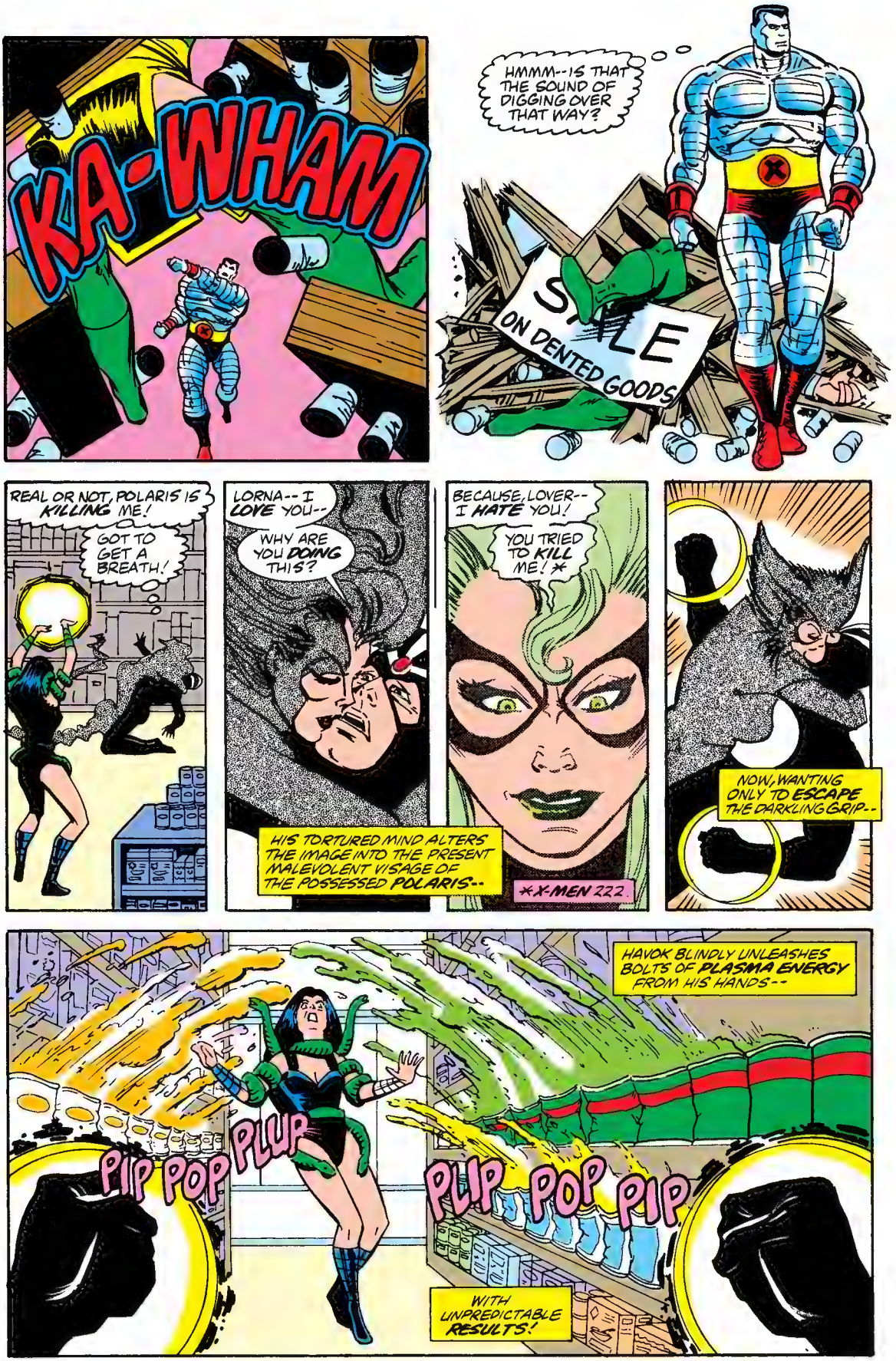

AMERICA IS SUCH A LAND OF PLENTY!
THE PEOPLE CLOTHE THEMSELVES MORE FROM VANITY THAN FROM NEED!

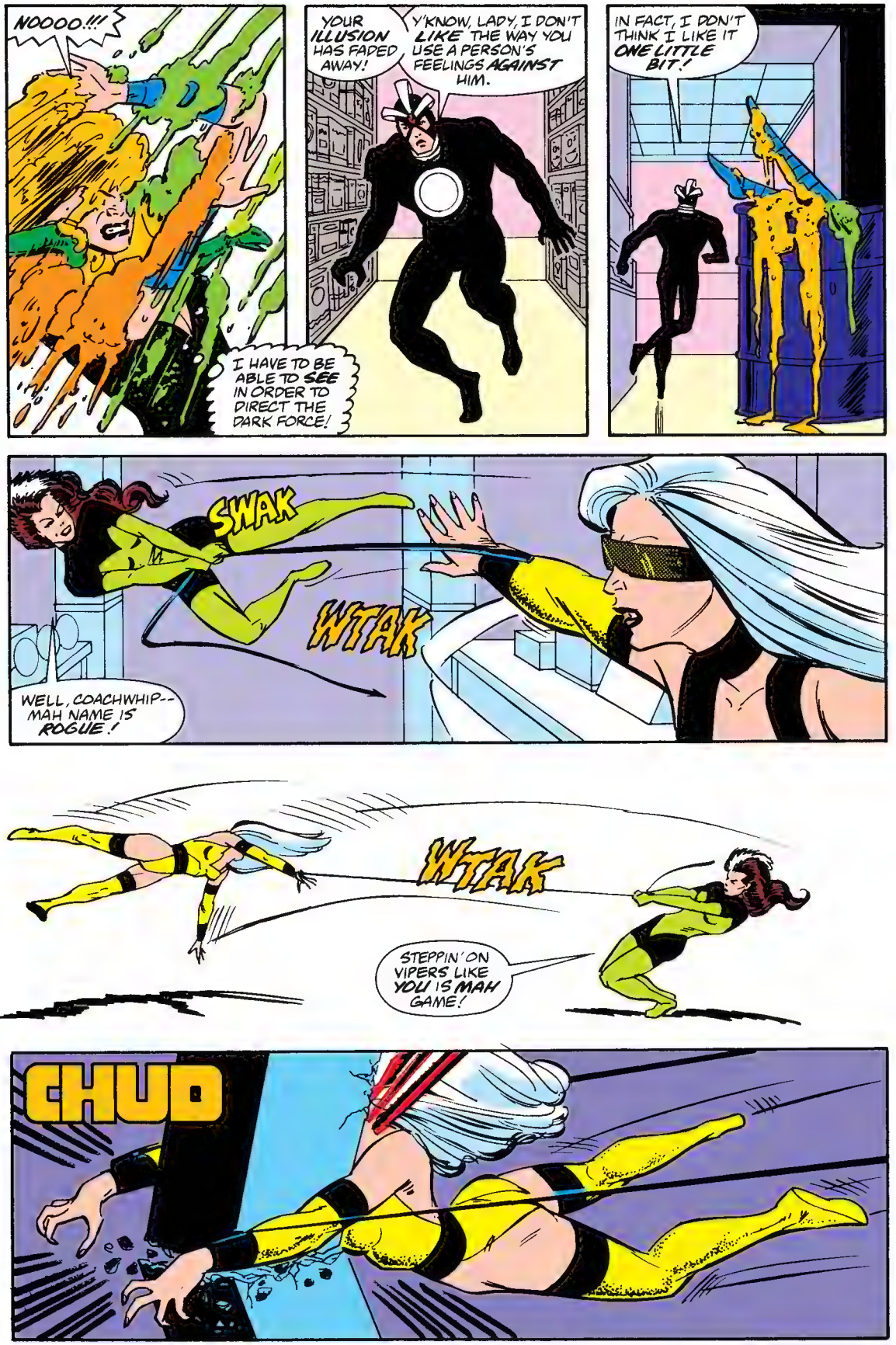

SURPRISE, TIN-POT!
THE HANDLE'S ANACONDA, NAMED FOR THE STRONGEST SNAKE ON EARTH!
NO ONE'S EVER SUCCEEDED IN BREAKIN' MY GRIP!
MY SLOW STEADY CONSTRICTION CAN CRUSH EVEN YOUR METAL FRAME!

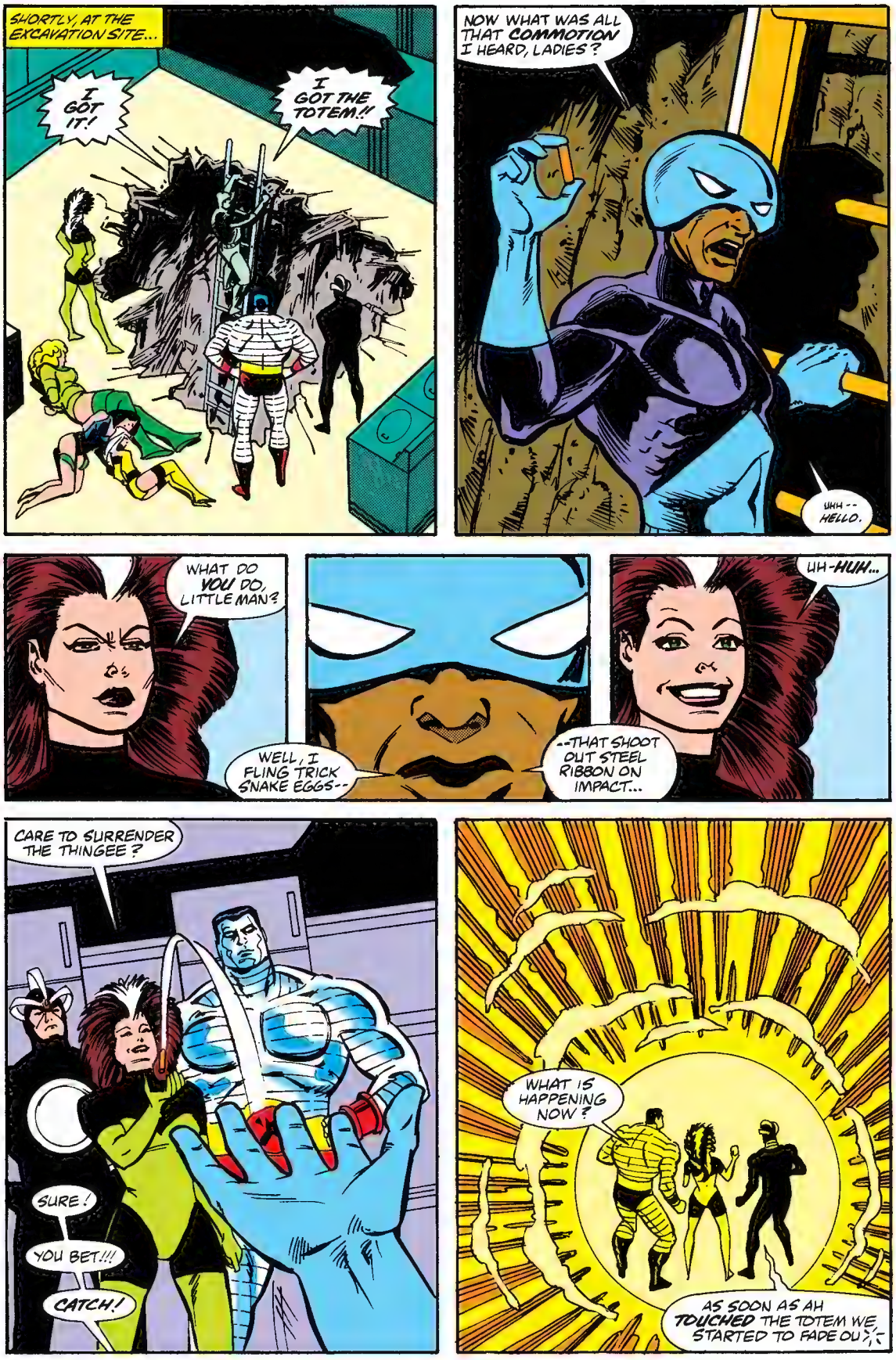
NNGGH! SHE MAY BE RIGHT!

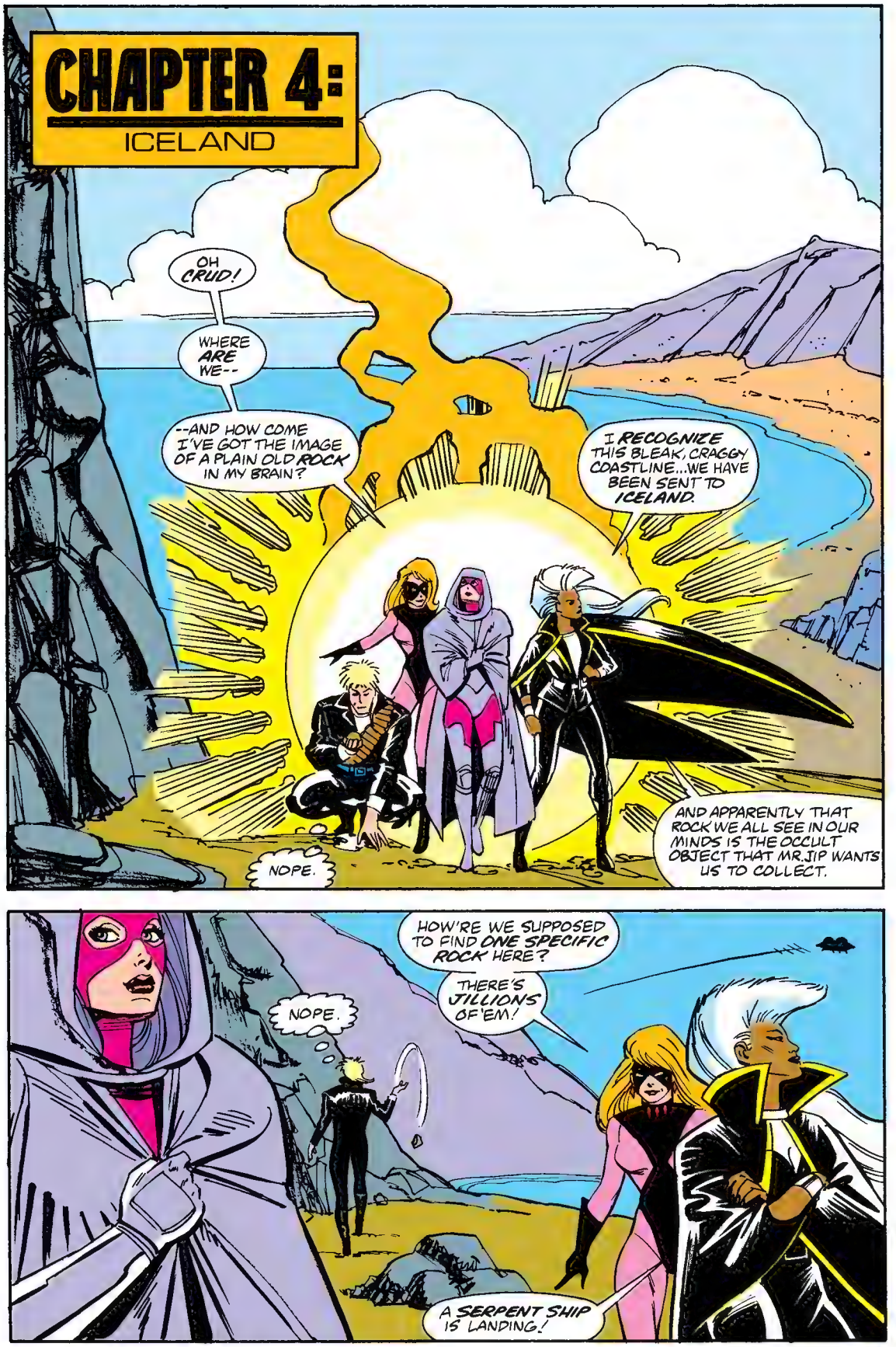

YOU'D HAVE THOUGHT THEY'D HAVE HAD THE DECENCY TO SWITCH OFF THE MUZAK BEFORE THEY LEFT!
WHO SAID THE LIFE OF A SUPER HERO ISN'T A GLAMOROUS ONE--?
SKULKING DOWN AISLES FULL OF CANNED PUDDING...
SEARCHING FOR SERPENTINE BAD-GUYS I'VE NEVER SEEN--
--ACCOMPANIED BY THE HAUNTING STRAINS OF VIC MIZZY DOING THE BEATLES' GREATEST HITS!
AT LEAST THINGS CAN'T GET ANY WORSE--
WHUZZAT?!
ALEX--
IT'S ME--LORNA!
YOU STILL LOVE ME--KISS ME, ALEX!
ONCE BLACK MAMBA'S DARK FORCE TAKES ON THE FORM OF THE ONE YOU LOVE MOST, YOU LOSE ALL DESIRE TO ESCAPE ITS ICY EMBRACE--
UNTIL IT CONSTRICTS, LEAVING YOU DEAD!
POLARIS?!? MMPPHFFH!
THIS CAN'T BE REAL--BUT SOMEHOW I WANT IT TO BE!

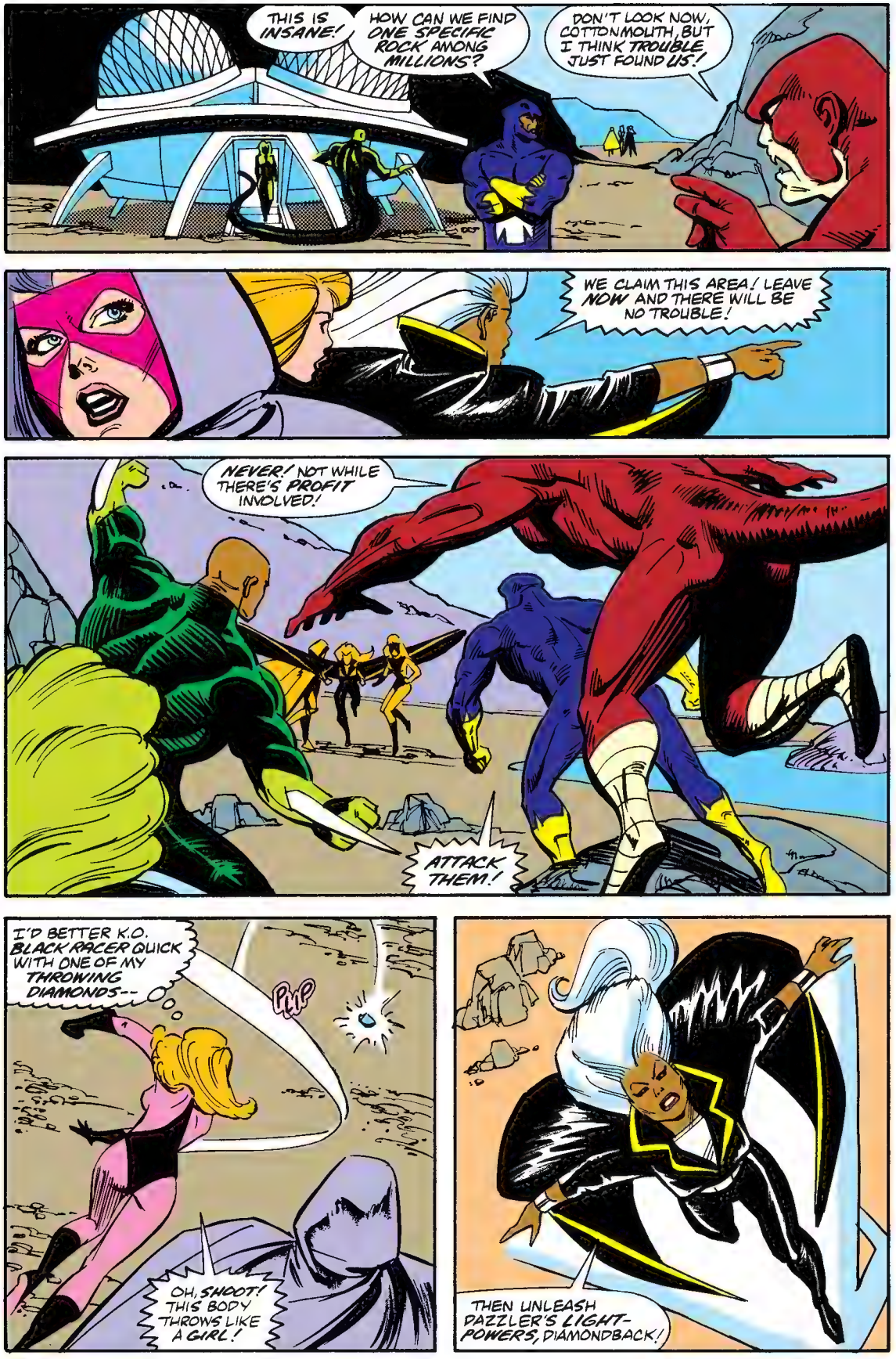

AH HATE TO ADMIT IT--
BUT, AH'VE ALWAYS HATED SNAKES!
BY COMPARISON, MICE'R NICE--
AND SPIDERS JUS' DANDY--
BUT SNAKES-- BRRRR!
SHE'S HEADED STRAIGHT FOR THE EXCAVATION-- GOTTA STOP HER!
HEY, LADY!
HMMM?
WTAK
SWISH
COACHWHIP'S THE NAME...
WTAK
--FLAYING FLESH IS MY GAME!
HOLY--!
HER WHIP RENT THAT STEEL SUPPORT BEAM JUST LIKE IT WAS BUTTAH!
MY SLOW BUT STEADY CONSTRICTION IS BEGINNING TO GET TO YOU, ISN'T IT, HON?
UGGNNG-- SHES LITERALLY STARTING TO CRUSH MY ARMORED FORM...!
AND I HAVEN'T EVEN BEGUN TO LOCK MY GRIP!
AND YOU NEVER SHALL!

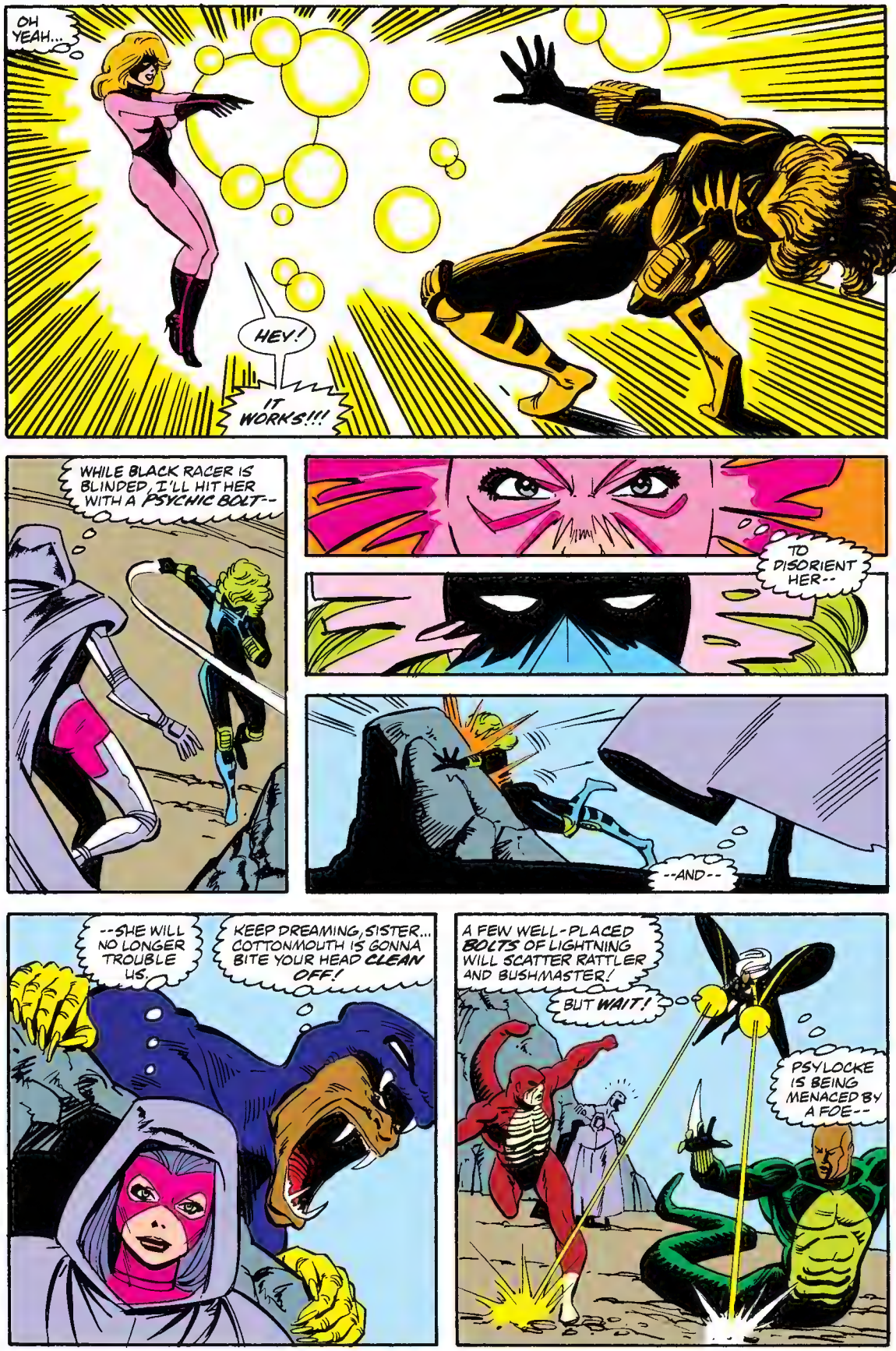

KA-WHAM
HMMM--IS THAT THE SOUND OF DIGGING OVER THAT WAY?
SALE
ON DENTED GOODS
REAL OR NOT, POLARIS IS KILLING ME!
GOT TO GET A BREATH!
LORNA--I LOVE YOU--
WHY ARE YOU DOING THIS?
HIS TORTURED MIND ALTERS THE IMAGE INTO THE PRESENT MALEVOLENT VISAGE OF THE POSSESSED POLARIS--
BECAUSE, LOVER--I HATE YOU!
YOU TRIED TO KILL ME! *
*X-MEN 222.
NOW, WANTING ONLY TO ESCAPE THE DARKLING GRIP--
HAVOK BLINDLY UNLEASHES BOLTS OF PLASMA ENERGY FROM HIS HANDS--
PIP POP PLUP
PLIP POP PIP
WITH UNPREDICTABLE RESULTS!

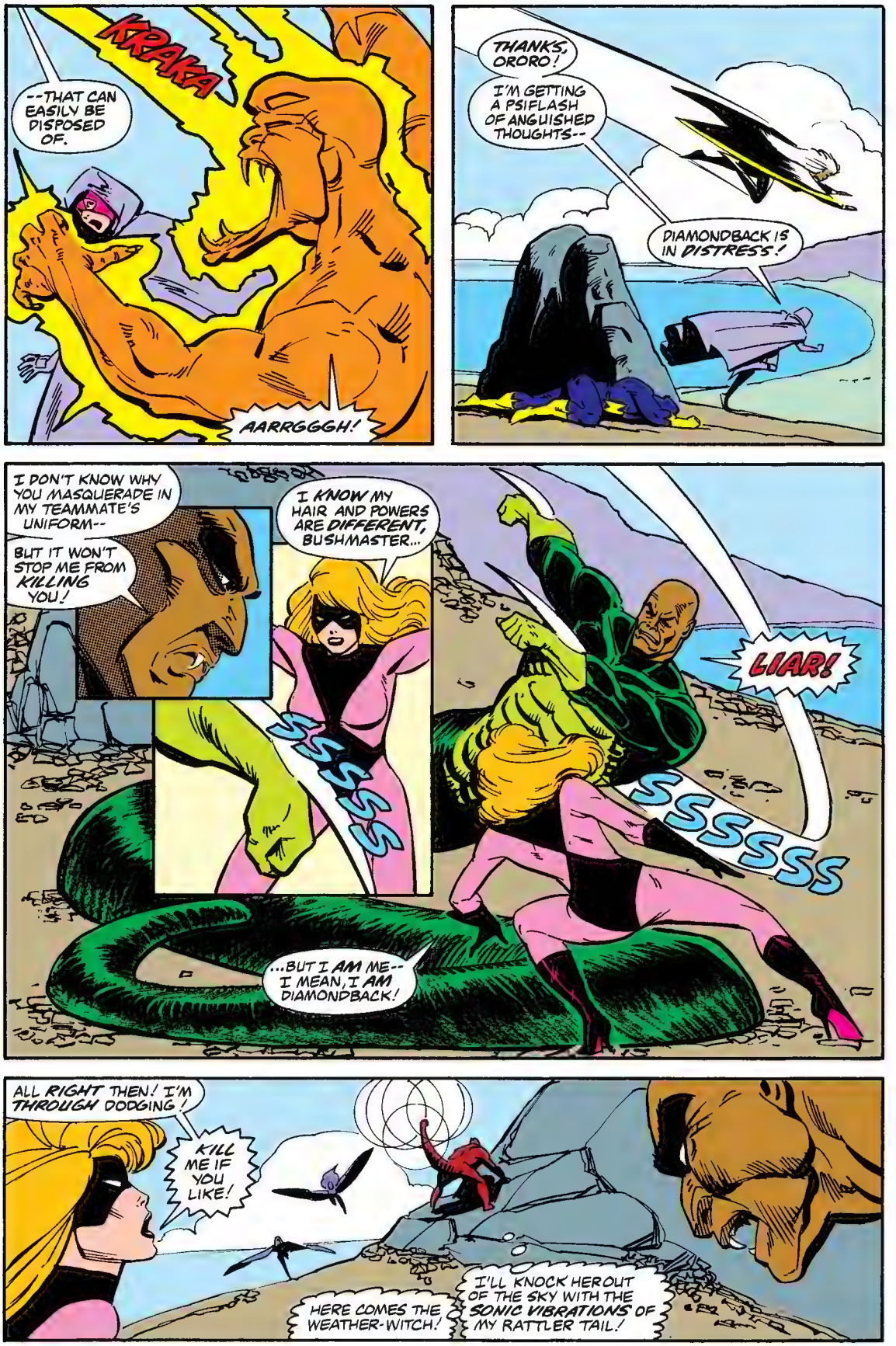

NOOOO!!!
I HAVE TO BE ABLE TO SEE IN ORDER TO DIRECT THE DARK FORCE!
YOUR ILLUSION HAS FADED AWAY!
Y'KNOW, LADY, I DON'T LIKE THE WAY YOU USE A PERSON'S FEELINGS AGAINST HIM.
IN FACT, I DON'T THINK I LIKE IT ONE LITTLE BIT.!
SWAK
WTAK
WELL, COACHWHIP-- MAH NAME IS ROGUE.!
WTAK
STEPPIN' ON VIPERS LIKE YOU IS MAH GAME!
CHUD


SHORTLY, AT THE EXCAVATION SITE...
I GOT IT!
I GOT THE TOTEM!!
NOW WHAT WAS ALL THAT COMMOTION I HEARD, LADIES?
UHH-- HELLO.
WHAT DO YOU DO, LITTLE MAN?
WELL, I FLING TRICK SNAKE EGGS--
--THAT SHOOT OUT STEEL RIBBON ON IMPACT...
UH-HUH...
CARE TO SURRENDER THE THINGEE?
SURE!
YOU BET!!!
CATCH!
WHAT IS HAPPENING NOW?
AS SOON AS AH TOUCHED THE TOTEM WE STARTED TO FADE OU


CHAPTER 4:
ICELAND
OH CRUD!
WHERE ARE WE--
--AND HOW COME I'VE GOT THE IMAGE OF A PLAIN OLD ROCK IN MY BRAIN?
I RECOGNIZE THIS BLEAK, CRAGGY COASTLINE...WE HAVE BEEN SENT TO ICELAND.
NOPE.
AND APPARENTLY THAT ROCK WE ALL SEE IN OUR MINDS IS THE OCCULT OBJECT THAT MR. JIP WANTS US TO COLLECT.
HOW'RE WE SUPPOSED TO FIND ONE SPECIFIC ROCK HERE?
THERE'S JILLIONS OF 'EM!
NOPE.
A SERPENT SHIP IS LANDING!

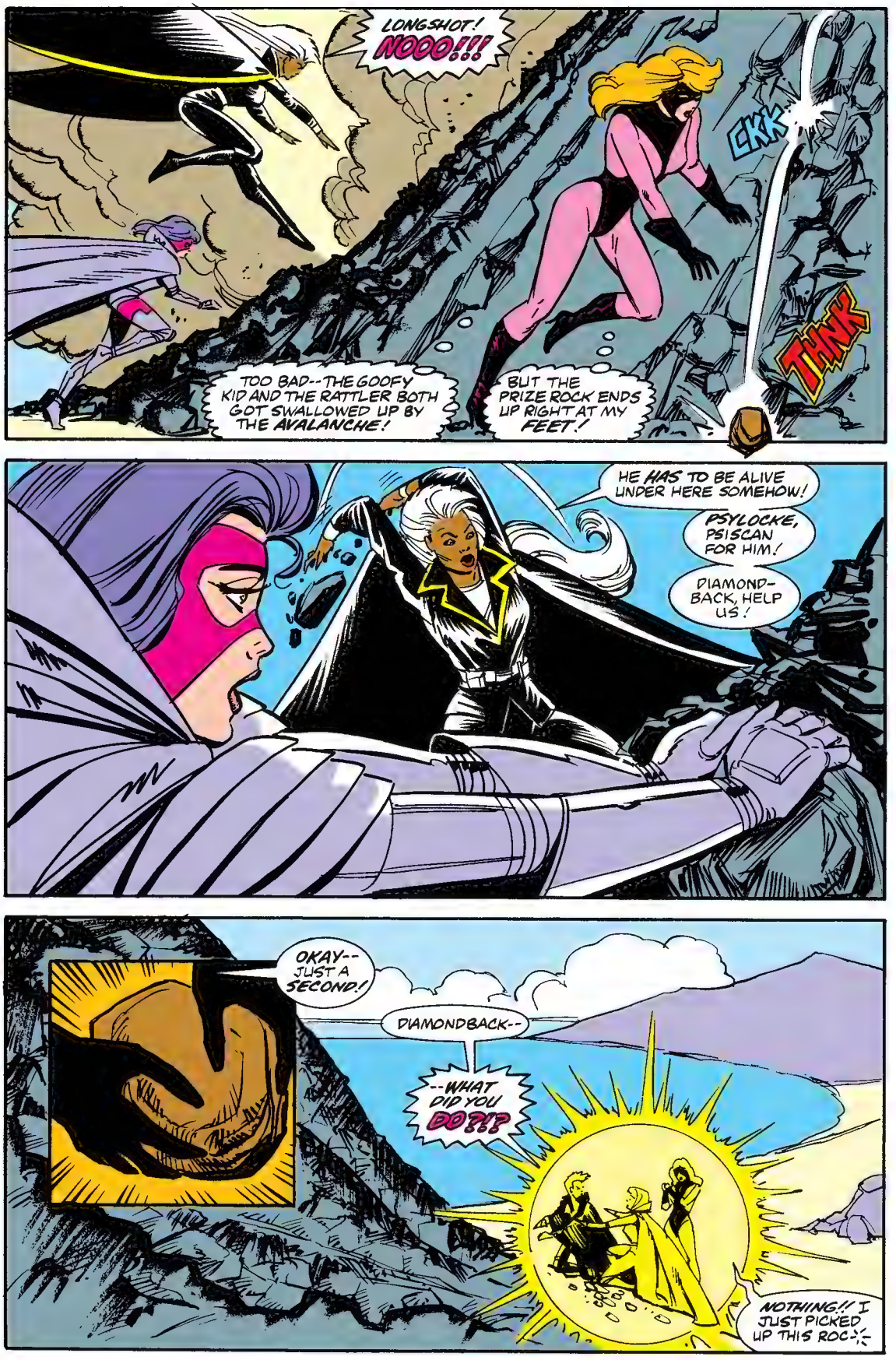

THIS IS INSANE!
HOW CAN WE FIND ONE SPECIFIC ROCK AMONG MILLIONS?
DON'T LOOK NOW, COTTONMOUTH, BUT I THINK TROUBLE JUST FOUND US!
WE CLAIM THIS AREA! LEAVE NOW AND THERE WILL BE NO TROUBLE!
NEVER! NOT WHILE THERE'S PROFIT INVOLVED!
ATTACK THEM!
I'D BETTER K.O. BLACK RACER QUICK WITH ONE OF MY THROWING DIAMONDS--
PLIP
OH, SHOOT! THIS BODY THROWS LIKE A GIRL!
THEN UNLEASH DAZZLER'S LIGHT-POWERS, DIAMONDBACK!


OH YEAH...
HEY!
IT WORKS!!!
WHILE BLACK RACER IS BLINDED, I'LL HIT HER WITH A PSYCHIC BOLT--
TO DISORIENT HER--
--AND--
--SHE WILL NO LONGER TROUBLE US.
KEEP DREAMING, SISTER... COTTONMOUTH IS GONNA BITE YOUR HEAD CLEAN OFF!
A FEW WELL-PLACED BOLTS OF LIGHTNING WILL SCATTER RATTLER AND BUSHMASTER!
BUT WAIT!
PSYLOCKE IS BEING MENACED BY A FOE--


KRAKA
--THAT CAN EASILY BE DISPOSED OF.
AARRGGGH!
THANKS, ORORO!
I'M GETTING A PSIFLASH OF ANGUISHED THOUGHTS--
DIAMONDBACK IS IN DISTRESS!
I DON'T KNOW WHY YOU MASQUERADE IN MY TEAMMATE'S UNIFORM--
BUT IT WON'T STOP ME FROM KILLING YOU!
I KNOW MY HAIR AND POWERS ARE DIFFERENT, BUSHMASTER...
SSSSS
LIAR!
SSSSSS
...BUT I AM ME-- I MEAN, I AM DIAMONDBACK!
ALL RIGHT THEN! I'M THROUGH DODGING!
KILL ME IF YOU LIKE!
HERE COMES THE WEATHER-WITCH!
I'LL KNOCK HER OUT OF THE SKY WITH THE SONIC VIBRATIONS OF MY RATTLER TAIL!

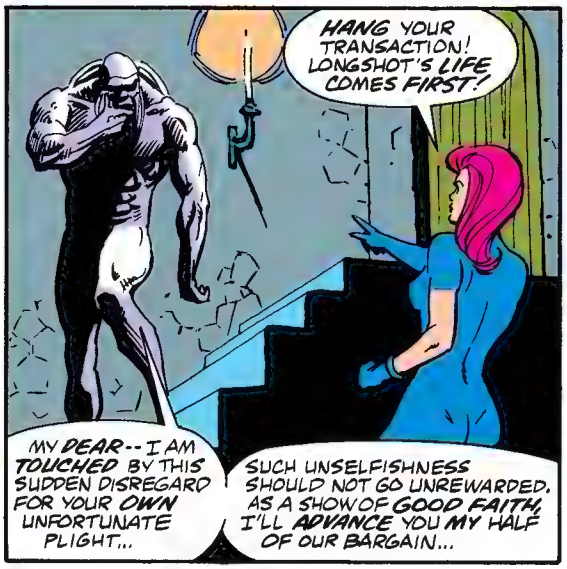
ARE YOU READY TO QUIT THE FIELD OF BATTLE YET, RATTLER?
NOT LIKELY!
NOT UNTIL I SEND YOU CRASHING TO EARTH AND GRIND YOUR BONES INTO POWDER!
I HAVE YOU NOW, WOMAN!!
YES, YOU DO.
OF COURSE, I COULD USE MY NEWLY-ACQUIRED LIGHT-POWERS TO LASER OFF YOUR BIONIC ARMS AND TAIL--
EFFECTIVELY IMMOBILIZING YOU...!
BUT THAT WOULD BE KIND OF A SHAME.
CONSIDERING HOW HARD I WORKED TO SAVE YOUR LIFE THE LAST TIME IT HAPPENED..*
* CAP AM. #313.
I RETURN TO OUR SHIP, DIAMONDBACK, TO SIT OUT THE REMAINDER OF THE CONFLICT...
HEY, EVERYBODY--
I OWED YOU A DEBT--
--IT IS NOW REPAID... TRAITOR!

HERE IT IS!
I FOUND THE ROCK!
INSUFFERABLY LUCKY SWINE!!
RRRRRR
I'LL DISLODGE THE ROCKS AT HIS FEET--
--AND BRING HIM--AND IT--SLIDING RIGHT INTO MY GRASP!
RATTLER--YOU FOOL!
STOP!
RRRRRRRR
ULP!
CRUMBLE
KRASSHHH
ARGG!


LONGSHOT! NOOO!!!
CRK!
THNK
TOO BAD--THE GOOFY KID AND THE RATTLER BOTH GOT SWALLOWED UP BY THE AVALANCHE!
BUT THE PRIZE ROCK ENDS UP RIGHT AT MY FEET!
HE HAS TO BE ALIVE UNDER HERE SOMEHOW!
PSYLOCKE, PSISCAN FOR HIM!
DIAMOND-BACK, HELP US!
OKAY-- JUST A SECOND!
DIAMONDBACK--
--WHAT DID YOU DO?!?
NOTHING!! I JUST PICKED UP THIS ROCK

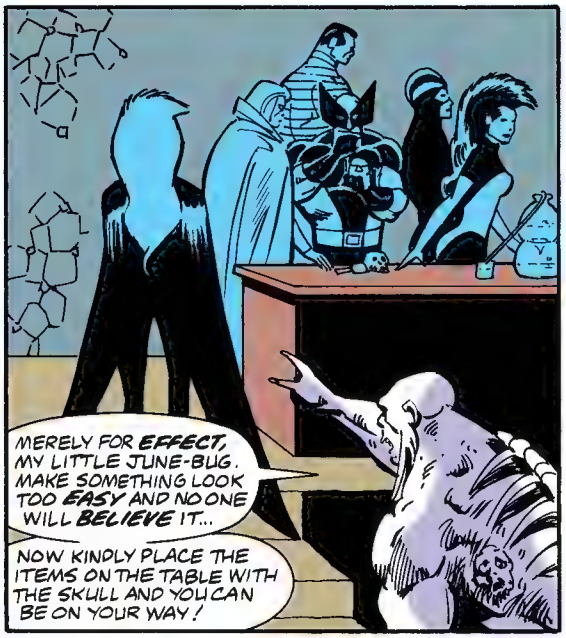
WELCOME, CHILDREN!
I SEE YOU'VE ALL ACCOMPLISHED YOUR MISSIONS WITH SPLENDID RESULTS!
CHAPTER 5:
MISTER JIP'S LAIR
LONGSHOT IS TRAPPED IN AN AVALANCHE!
WE HAVE TO RETURN FOR HIM IMMEDIATELY!

OH, NO-- NO!!!
I'M SORRY, BUT FIRST THERE IS THE LITTLE MATTER OF OUR TRANSACTION TO COMPLETE...


HANG YOUR TRANSACTION! LONGSHOT'S LIFE COMES FIRST!
MY DEAR-- I AM TOUCHED BY THIS SUDDEN DISREGARD FOR YOUR OWN UNFORTUNATE PLIGHT...
SUCH UNSELFISHNESS SHOULD NOT GO UNREWARDED. AS A SHOW OF GOOD FAITH, I'LL ADVANCE YOU MY HALF OF OUR BARGAIN...

LIKE SO...
THE CHARMING FEMALES ARE RESTORED ONCE MORE.

I'M BACK IN MY OWN ADORABLE BODY AGAIN!
IT--IT WAS SO SIMPLE.
WHAT WAS ALL THAT EQUIPMENT FOR EARLIER?

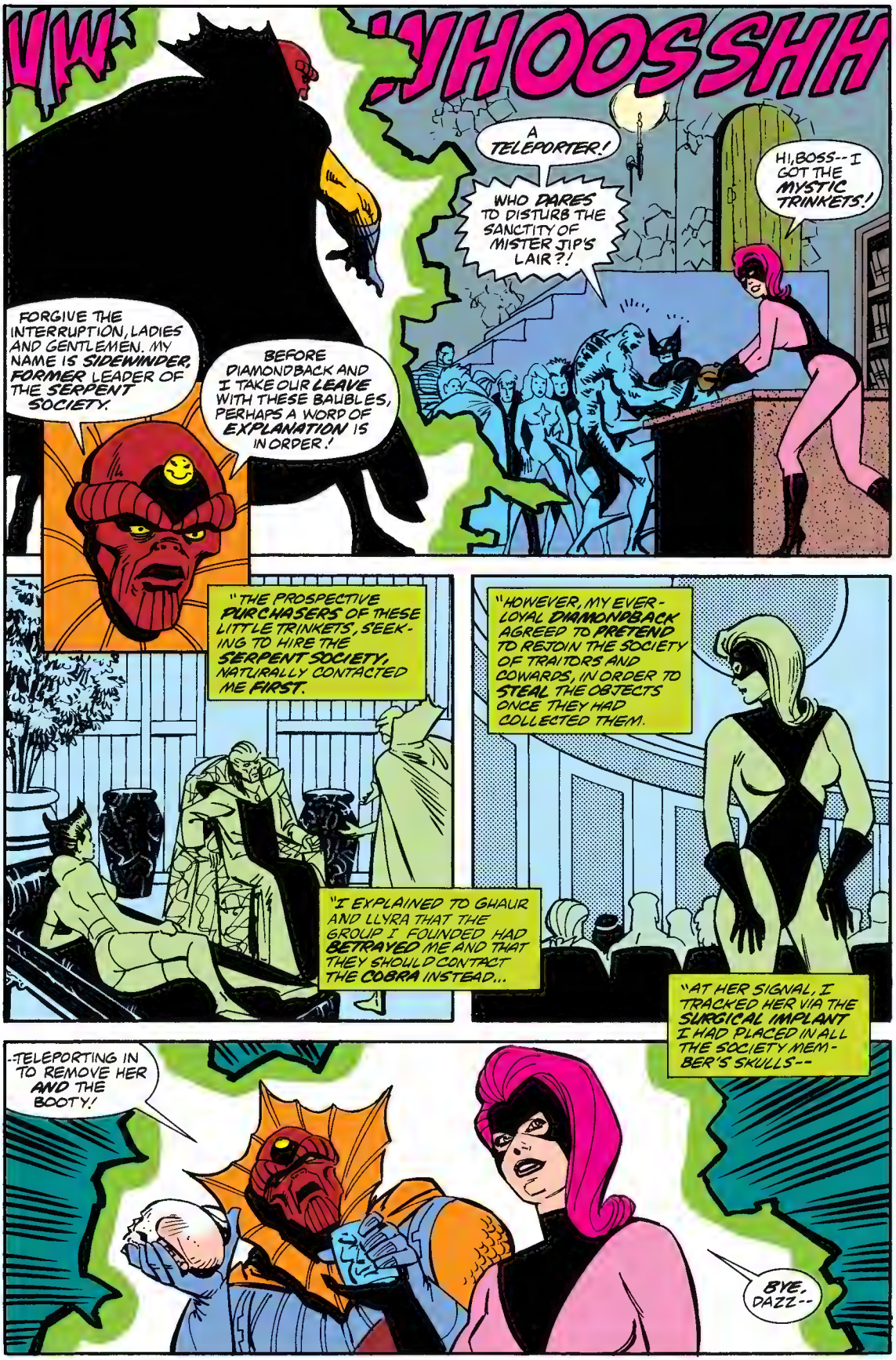

MERELY FOR EFFECT, MY LITTLE JUNE-BUG. MAKE SOMETHING LOOK TOO EASY AND NO ONE WILL BELIEVE IT...
NOW KINDLY PLACE THE ITEMS ON THE TABLE WITH THE SKULL AND YOU CAN BE ON YOUR WAY!

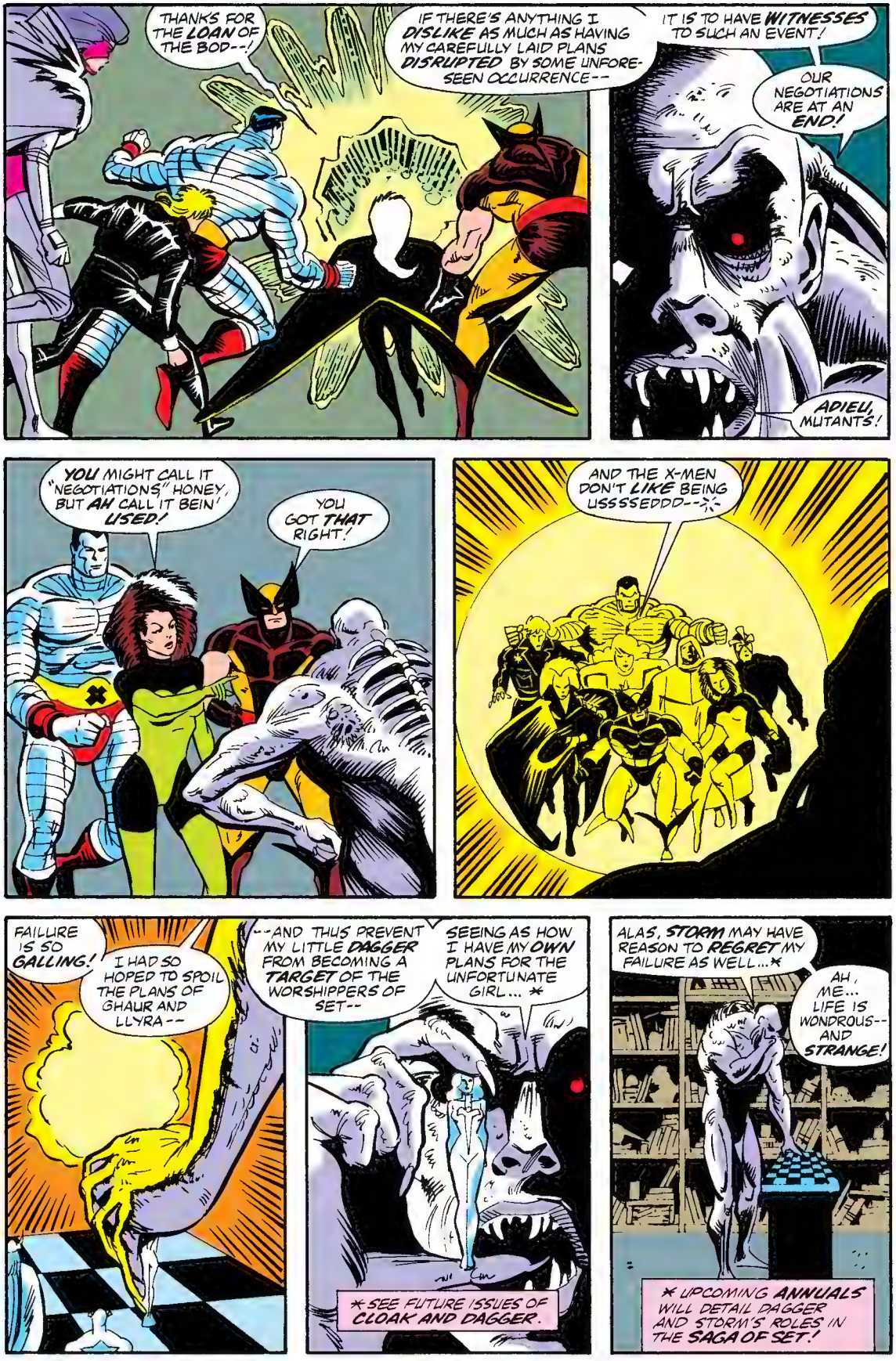
HERE.
AS FAR AS I'M CONCERNED, THIS WHOLE THING STINKS.
TAK

WHAT IN SAM HILL--?!

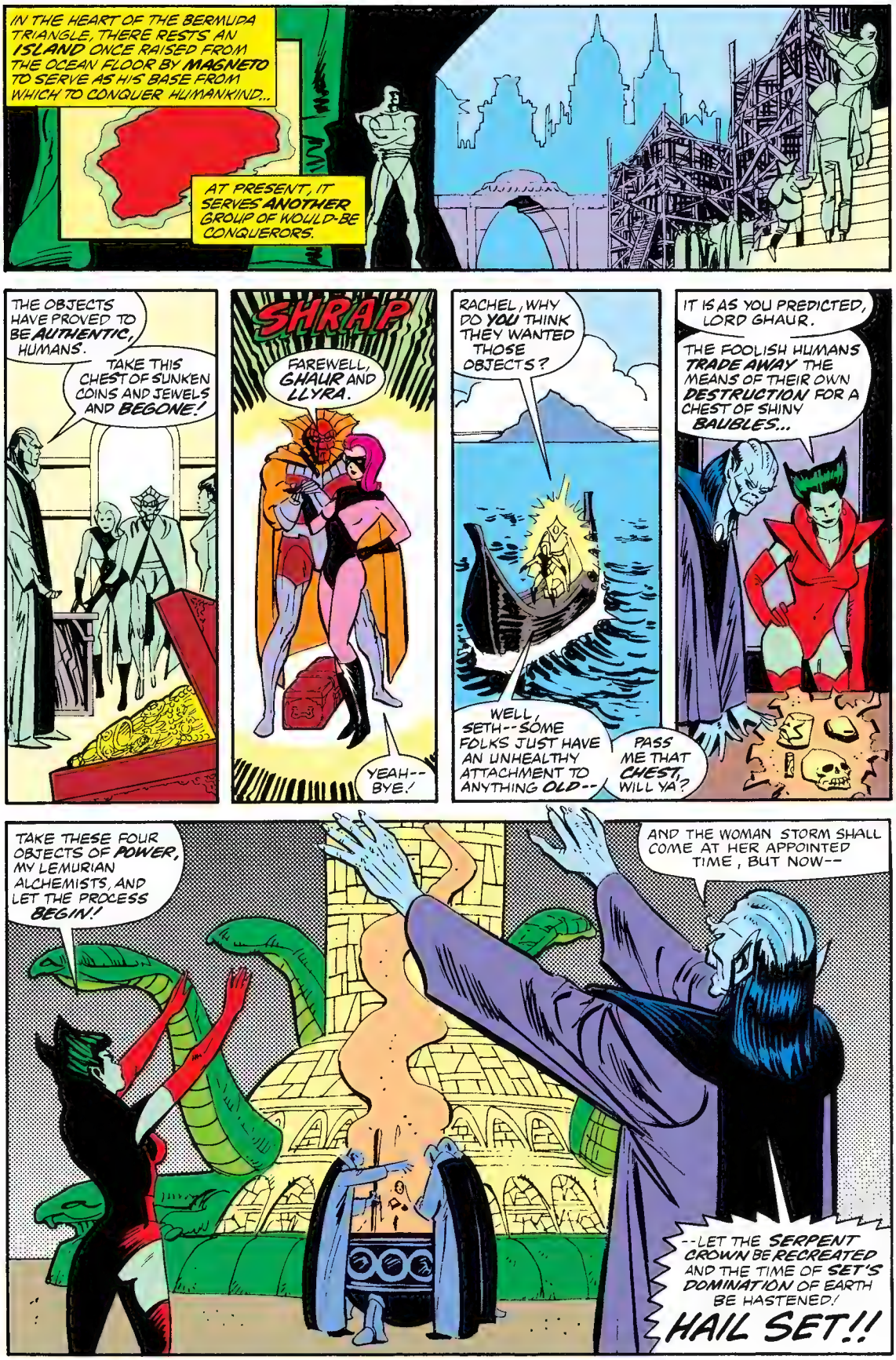
THE BLAMED THINGS ARE CRACKLIN' WITH ENERGY!

RAPTUROUS, ISN'T IT?
IT IS INCONCEIVABLE TO ME THAT SHORT-SIGHTED CRETINS LIKE YOURSELF WOULD TRADE THE GLORIOUS THRILL OF FORBIDDEN KNOWLEDGE AND POWER FOR ONE INCONSEQUENTIAL HUMAN LIFE...
MISTER, LONGSHOT IS A FRIEND OF OURS AND HE MIGHT BE DEAD, THANKS TO YOU.
I'M BETTING THAT SOMEWHERE IN THAT DISEASED MASS OF FLESH THERE'S A HEART PUMPING BLOOD--
--AND I AIM TO SEE IT HERE ON THIS TABLE BEFORE I'M THROUGH!
AHHH, LOGAN. ALWAYS THE IMPETUOUS ONE!
PERHAPS YOU'D CARE TO JOIN ME FOR ONE LAST ACT OF COMMERCE--MY LIFE FOR THAT OF YOUR ABSENT COMRADE?
THEN I WAS RIGHT--LONGSHOT IS ALIVE!
OF COURSE, DEAR WOMAN, I MERELY HELD HIM IN ABEYANCE IN CASE SOMETHING OF THIS UNPLEASANT NATURE SHOULD TRANSPIRE...
WELCOME BACK, SUGAH!
HOW DID YOU COME TO SURVIVE, FRIEND LONGSHOT?
I FELL IN A BIG HOLE UNDER THE ROCKS.
LUCKY AS EVER, HUH KID?
I THINK WE CAN RELEASE ONE ANOTHER NOW, MR. LOGAN.
VWW

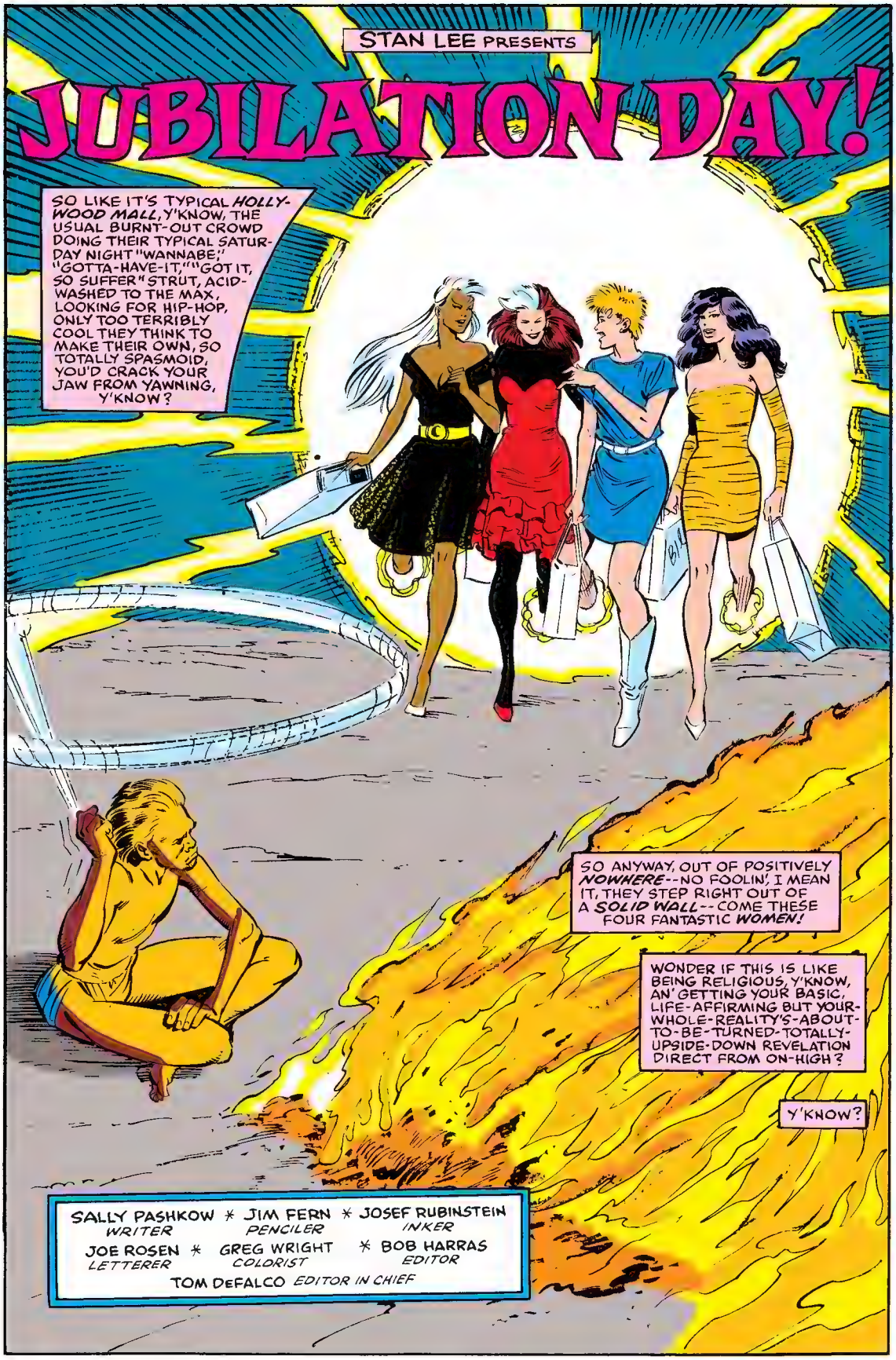

VW
YHOOSSHH
A TELEPORTER!
WHO DARES TO DISTURB THE SANCTITY OF MISTER JIP'S LAIR?!
HI, BOSS-- I GOT THE MYSTIC TRINKETS!
FORGIVE THE INTERRUPTION, LADIES AND GENTLEMEN. MY NAME IS SIDEWINDER, FORMER LEADER OF THE SERPENT SOCIETY.
BEFORE DIAMONDBACK AND I TAKE OUR LEAVE WITH THESE BAUBLES, PERHAPS A WORD OF EXPLANATION IS IN ORDER!
"THE PROSPECTIVE PURCHASERS OF THESE LITTLE TRINKETS, SEEKING TO HIRE THE SERPENT SOCIETY, NATURALLY CONTACTED ME FIRST.
"HOWEVER, MY EVER-LOYAL DIAMONDBACK AGREED TO PRETEND TO REJOIN THE SOCIETY OF TRAITORS AND COWARDS, IN ORDER TO STEAL THE OBJECTS ONCE THEY HAD COLLECTED THEM.
"I EXPLAINED TO GHAUR AND LLYRA THAT THE GROUP I FOUNDED HAD BETRAYED ME AND THAT THEY SHOULD CONTACT THE COBRA INSTEAD...
"AT HER SIGNAL, I TRACKED HER VIA THE SURGICAL IMPLANT I HAD PLACED IN ALL THE SOCIETY MEMBER'S SKULLS--
-TELEPORTING IN TO REMOVE HER AND THE BOOTY!
BYE, DAZZ--

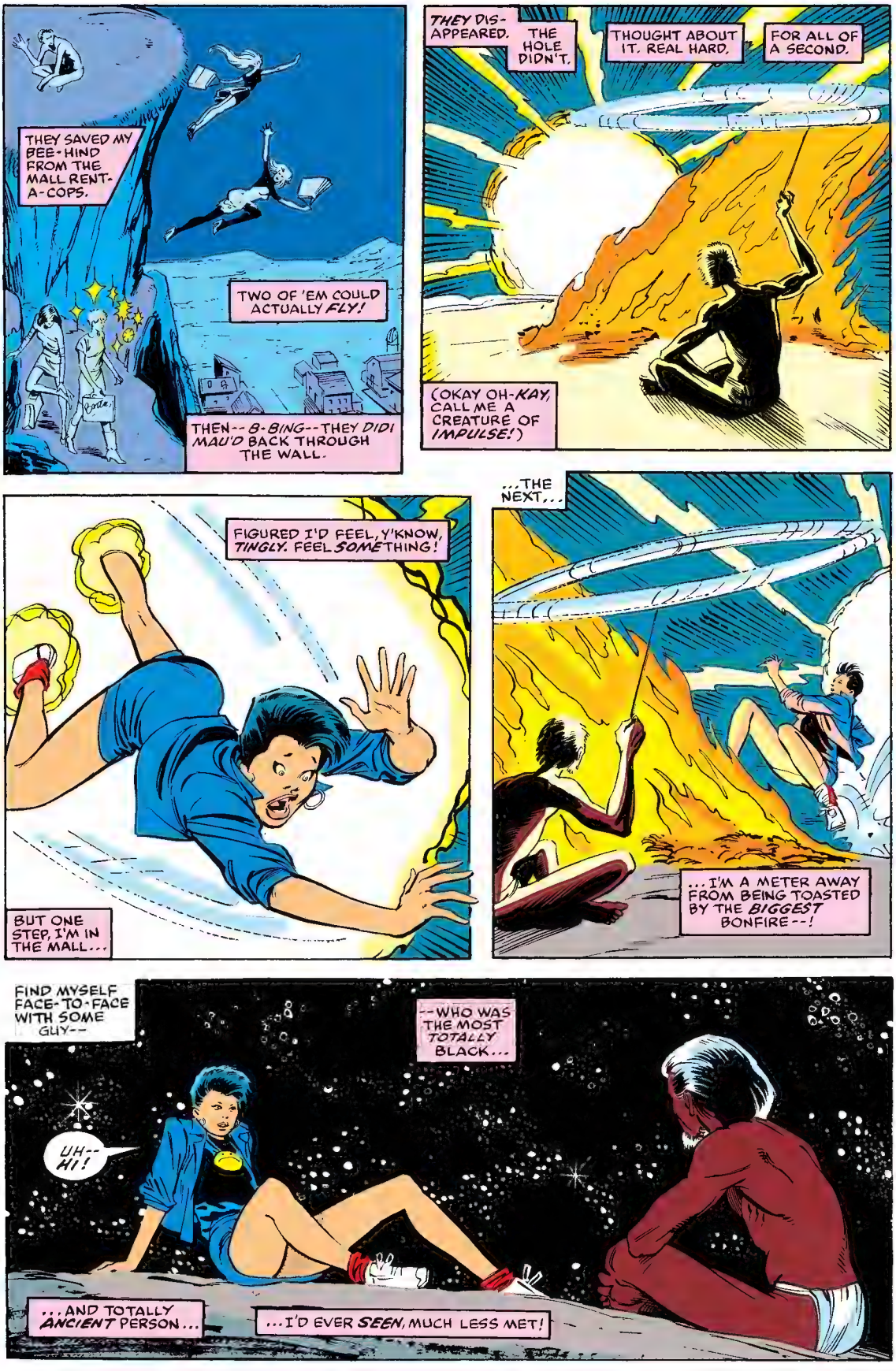

THANKS FOR THE LOAN OF THE BOD--!
IF THERE'S ANYTHING I DISLIKE AS MUCH AS HAVING MY CAREFULLY LAID PLANS DISRUPTED BY SOME UNFORESEEN OCCURRENCE--
IT IS TO HAVE WITNESSES TO SUCH AN EVENT!
OUR NEGOTIATIONS ARE AT AN END!
ADIEU, MUTANTS!
YOU MIGHT CALL IT "NEGOTIATIONS," HONEY, BUT AH CALL IT BEIN' USED!
YOU GOT THAT RIGHT!
AND THE X-MEN DON'T LIKE BEING USSS'SEDDD--!
FAILURE IS SO GALLING!
I HAD SO HOPED TO SPOIL THE PLANS OF GHAUR AND LLYRA--
--AND THUS PREVENT MY LITTLE DAGGER FROM BECOMING A TARGET OF THE WORSHIPPERS OF SET--
SEEING AS HOW I HAVE MY OWN PLANS FOR THE UNFORTUNATE GIRL... *
* SEE FUTURE ISSUES OF CLOAK AND DAGGER.
ALAS, STORM MAY HAVE REASON TO REGRET MY FAILURE AS WELL...*
AH, ME... LIFE IS WONDROUS--AND STRANGE!
* UPCOMING ANNUALS WILL DETAIL DAGGER AND STORM'S ROLES IN THE SAGA OF SET!

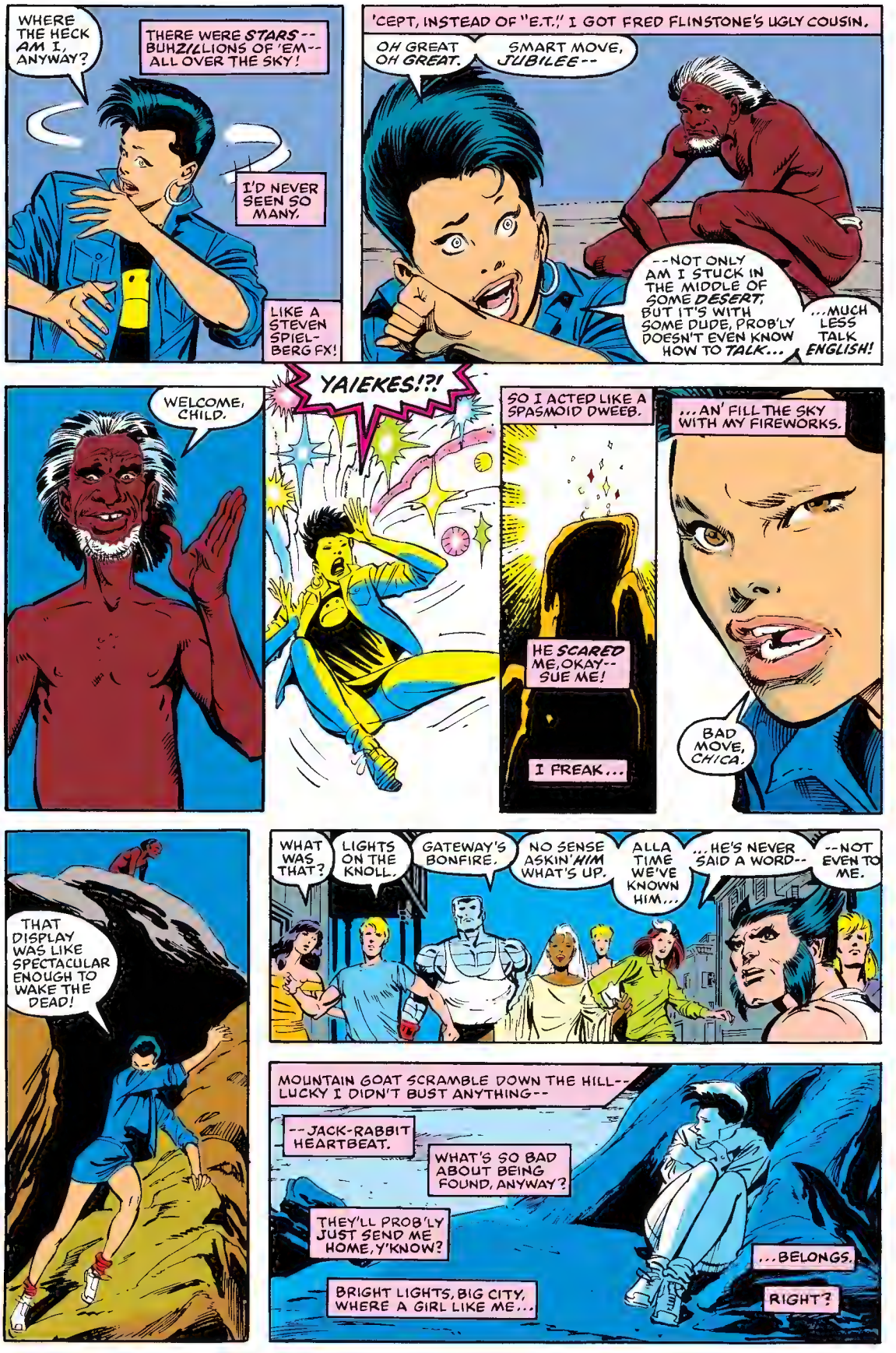
WE'RE HOME!
AND NONE THE WORSE FOR WEAR, IT SEEMS.
SPEAK FOR YOURSELF.
I'VE GOT THOSE "REALLY FAT THIGHS" BACK AGAIN, REMEMBER?
BUT FOR NOW...
AH WONDAH WHY EVERYONE WAS SO ALL-FIRED HOT TO GET THEIR HANDS ON THOSE MYSTIC DOO-DADS?
NO GOOD WILL COME OF THEM, OF THAT I AM SURE...
I'M SORRY I DIDN'T TAKE YOU AT YOUR WORD, LOGAN-- I WAS PRETTY UPSET.
C'MON BACK TO CAMP, AND I'LL STAKE YOU TO A ROOT BEER!
IF THAT'S WHAT IT TAKES TO BE PALS AGAIN, I MIGHT EVEN GO THAT FAR!
ELSEWHERE...
"AND SO, MY FORMER FRIENDS, I WILL SEND YOU YOUR TEN PER CENT COMMISSION UPON COMPLETION OF THE TRANSACTION."
TEN PER CENT.?!
THAT-- THAT SIDEWINDER!

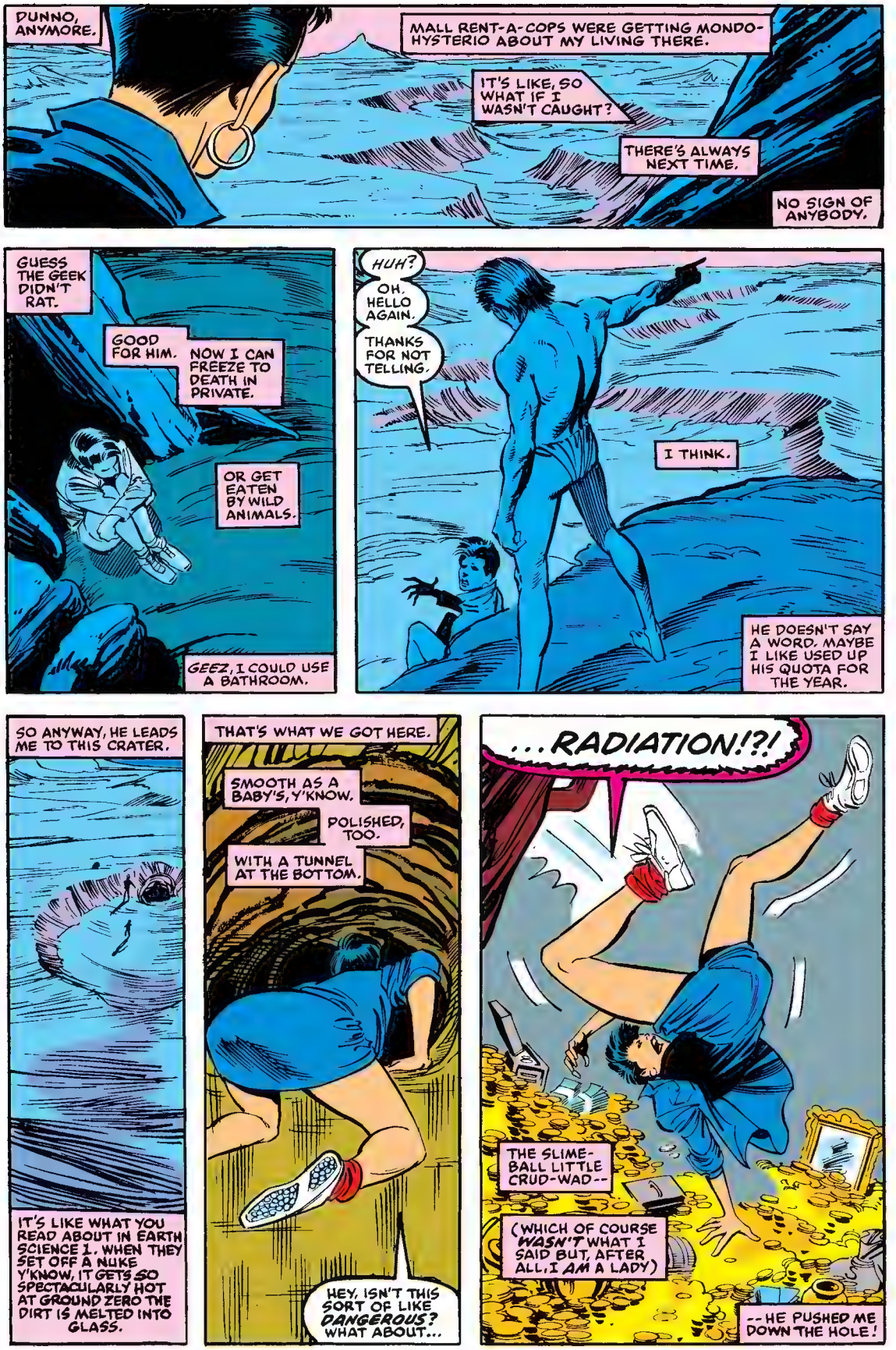

IN THE HEART OF THE BERMUDA TRIANGLE, THERE RESTS AN ISLAND ONCE RAISED FROM THE OCEAN FLOOR BY MAGNETO TO SERVE AS HIS BASE FROM WHICH TO CONQUER HUMANKIND...
AT PRESENT, IT SERVES ANOTHER GROUP OF WOULD-BE CONQUERORS.
THE OBJECTS HAVE PROVED TO BE AUTHENTIC, HUMANS.
TAKE THIS CHEST OF SUNKEN COINS AND JEWELS AND BEGONE!
SHRAP
FAREWELL, GHAUR AND LLYRA.
YEAH-- BYE!
RACHEL, WHY DO YOU THINK THEY WANTED THOSE OBJECTS?
WELL, SETH--SOME FOLKS JUST HAVE AN UNHEALTHY ATTACHMENT TO ANYTHING OLD--
PASS ME THAT CHEST, WILL YA?
IT IS AS YOU PREDICTED, LORD GHAUR.
THE FOOLISH HUMANS TRADE AWAY THE MEANS OF THEIR OWN DESTRUCTION FOR A CHEST OF SHINY BAUBLES...
TAKE THESE FOUR OBJECTS OF POWER, MY LEMURIAN ALCHEMISTS, AND LET THE PROCESS BEGIN!
AND THE WOMAN STORM SHALL COME AT HER APPOINTED TIME, BUT NOW--
--LET THE SERPENT CROWN BE RECREATED AND THE TIME OF SET'S DOMINATION OF EARTH BE HASTENED!
HAIL SET!!

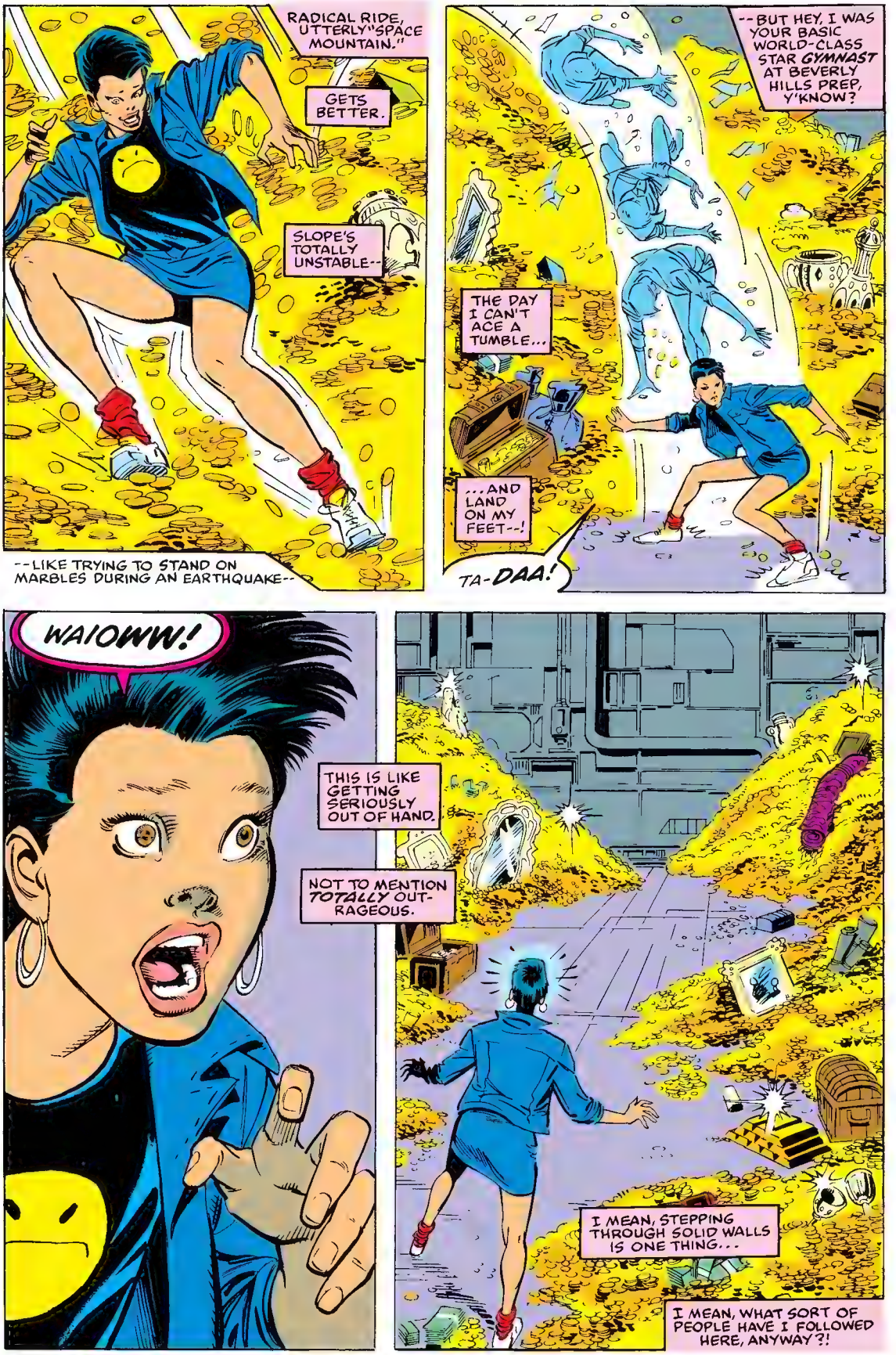
THE SAGA OF SET CONTINUES IN AMAZING SPIDER-MAN ANNUAL #23


STAN LEE PRESENTS
JUBILATION DAY!
SO LIKE IT'S TYPICAL HOLLYWOOD MALL, Y'KNOW, THE USUAL BURNT-OUT CROWD DOING THEIR TYPICAL SATURDAY NIGHT "WANNABE," "GOTTA-HAVE-IT," "GOT IT, SO SUFFER" STRUT, ACID-WASHED TO THE MAX, LOOKING FOR HIP-HOP, ONLY TOO TERRIBLY COOL THEY THINK TO MAKE THEIR OWN, SO TOTALLY SPASMOID, YOU'D CRACK YOUR JAW FROM YAWNING, Y'KNOW?
SO ANYWAY, OUT OF POSITIVELY NOWHERE--NO FOOLIN', I MEAN IT, THEY STEP RIGHT OUT OF A SOLID WALL--COME THESE FOUR FANTASTIC WOMEN!
WONDER IF THIS IS LIKE BEING RELIGIOUS, Y'KNOW, AN' GETTING YOUR BASIC, LIFE-AFFIRMING BUT YOUR-WHOLE-REALITY'S-ABOUT-TO-BE-TURNED-TOTALLY-UPSIDE-DOWN REVELATION DIRECT FROM ON-HIGH?
Y'KNOW?
SALLY PASHKOW WRITER * JIM FERN PENCILER * JOSEF RUBINSTEIN INKER
JOE ROSEN LETTERER * GREG WRIGHT COLORIST * BOB HARRAS EDITOR
TOM DEFALCO EDITOR IN CHIEF


THEY SAVED MY BEE-HIND FROM THE MALL RENT-A-COPS.
TWO OF 'EM COULD ACTUALLY FLY!
THEN-- B-BING-- THEY DIDI MAU'D BACK THROUGH THE WALL.
THEY DIS-APPEARED. THE HOLE DIDN'T.
THOUGHT ABOUT IT. REAL HARD.
FOR ALL OF A SECOND.
(OKAY OH-KAY, CALL ME A CREATURE OF IMPULSE!)
FIGURED I'D FEEL, Y'KNOW, TINGLY. FEEL SOMETHING!
BUT ONE STEP, I'M IN THE MALL...
...THE NEXT...
...I'M A METER AWAY FROM BEING TOASTED BY THE BIGGEST BONFIRE--!
FIND MYSELF FACE-TO-FACE WITH SOME GUY--
UH-- HI!
--WHO WAS THE MOST TOTALLY BLACK...
...AND TOTALLY ANCIENT PERSON...
...I'D EVER SEEN, MUCH LESS MET!


WHERE THE HECK AM I, ANYWAY?
THERE WERE STARS--BUHZILLIONS OF 'EM--ALL OVER THE SKY!
I'D NEVER SEEN SO MANY.
LIKE A STEVEN SPIEL-BERG FX!
'CEPT, INSTEAD OF "E.T.," I GOT FRED FLINSTONE'S UGLY COUSIN.
OH GREAT OH GREAT.
SMART MOVE, JUBILEE--
--NOT ONLY AM I STUCK IN THE MIDDLE OF SOME DESERT, BUT IT'S WITH SOME DUDE, PROB'LY DOESN'T EVEN KNOW HOW TO TALK...
...MUCH LESS TALK ENGLISH!
WELCOME, CHILD.
YAIEKES!?!
SO I ACTED LIKE A SPASMOID DWEEB.
HE SCARED ME, OKAY--SUE ME!
I FREAK...
...AN' FILL THE SKY WITH MY FIREWORKS.
BAD MOVE, CHICA.
THAT DISPLAY WAS LIKE SPECTACULAR ENOUGH TO WAKE THE DEAD!
WHAT WAS THAT?
LIGHTS ON THE KNOLL.
GATEWAY'S BONFIRE.
NO SENSE ASKIN' HIM WHAT'S UP.
ALLA TIME WE'VE KNOWN HIM...
...HE'S NEVER SAID A WORD--
--NOT EVEN TO ME.
MOUNTAIN GOAT SCRAMBLE DOWN THE HILL--LUCKY I DIDN'T BUST ANYTHING--
--JACK-RABBIT HEARTBEAT.
WHAT'S SO BAD ABOUT BEING FOUND, ANYWAY?
THEY'LL PROB'LY JUST SEND ME HOME, Y'KNOW?
BRIGHT LIGHTS, BIG CITY, WHERE A GIRL LIKE ME...
...BELONGS.
RIGHT?


DUNNO, ANYMORE.
MALL RENT-A-COPS WERE GETTING MONDO-HYSTERIO ABOUT MY LIVING THERE.
IT'S LIKE, SO WHAT IF I WASN'T CAUGHT?
THERE'S ALWAYS NEXT TIME.
NO SIGN OF ANYBODY.
GUESS THE GEEK DIDN'T RAT.
GOOD FOR HIM.
NOW I CAN FREEZE TO DEATH IN PRIVATE.
OR GET EATEN BY WILD ANIMALS.
GEEZ, I COULD USE A BATHROOM.
HUH?
OH. HELLO AGAIN.
THANKS FOR NOT TELLING.
I THINK.
HE DOESN'T SAY A WORD. MAYBE I LIKE USED UP HIS QUOTA FOR THE YEAR.
SO ANYWAY, HE LEADS ME TO THIS CRATER.
IT'S LIKE WHAT YOU READ ABOUT IN EARTH SCIENCE 1. WHEN THEY SET OFF A NUKE Y'KNOW, IT GETS SO SPECTACULARLY HOT AT GROUND ZERO THE DIRT IS MELTED INTO GLASS.
THAT'S WHAT WE GOT HERE.
SMOOTH AS A BABY'S, Y'KNOW.
POLISHED, TOO.
WITH A TUNNEL AT THE BOTTOM.
HEY, ISN'T THIS SORT OF LIKE DANGEROUS? WHAT ABOUT...
...RADIATION!?!
THE SLIME-BALL LITTLE CRUD-WAD--
(WHICH OF COURSE WASN'T WHAT I SAID BUT, AFTER ALL, I AM A LADY)
--HE PUSHED ME DOWN THE HOLE!

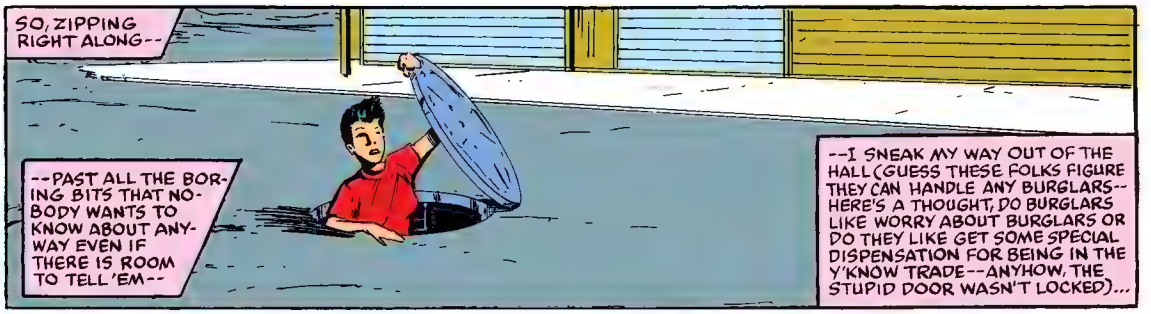

RADICAL RIDE, UTTERLY "SPACE MOUNTAIN."
GETS BETTER.
SLOPE'S TOTALLY UNSTABLE--
--LIKE TRYING TO STAND ON MARBLES DURING AN EARTHQUAKE--
--BUT HEY, I WAS YOUR BASIC WORLD-CLASS STAR *GYMNAST* AT BEVERLY HILLS PREP, Y'KNOW?
THE DAY I CAN'T ACE A TUMBLE...
...AND LAND ON MY FEET--!
TA-*DAA!*
WAIOWW!
THIS IS LIKE GETTING SERIOUSLY OUT OF HAND.
NOT TO MENTION *TOTALLY* OUT-RAGEOUS.
I MEAN, STEPPING THROUGH SOLID WALLS IS ONE THING...
I MEAN, WHAT SORT OF PEOPLE HAVE I FOLLOWED HERE, ANYWAY?!

WOULDN'T YOU KNOW, I'M LIKE TOTALLY STUCK DOWN THIS HOLE.
VERY NASTY THOUGHTS ABOUT THIS GEEK. HE OWES ME.
OKAY, SO MAYBE IT'S MY OWN FAULT, SO SUE ME.
MY BODY STARTS GETTING AS TWITCHY AS MY HEAD--SAME KIND OF FEELING YOU GET WHEN YOU CROSS THAT LINE IN SCHOOL BETWEEN YOUR TURF AN' SOMEONE ELSE'S.
IT'S TIME FOR A DIVERSION.

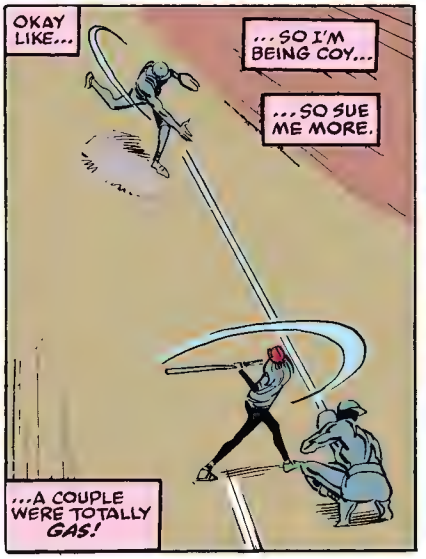
WHAT BETTER THAN FOR THE CHICA TO GO EXPLORING, AND SCOPE THE LOCAL MERCHANDISE.
HEY, I'VE SHOPPED RODEO DRIVE, AN' MY SORT OF NOT-QUITE BEST FRIEND CYNJIN (REALLY CYNTHIA JENNIFER, CAN'T YOU JUST GAG) HAS A "DROP BY ANYTIME" ACCOUNT AT BIJAN, EVEN...
...BUT THIS WAS LIKE NOT TOO TERRIBLY SHABBY--

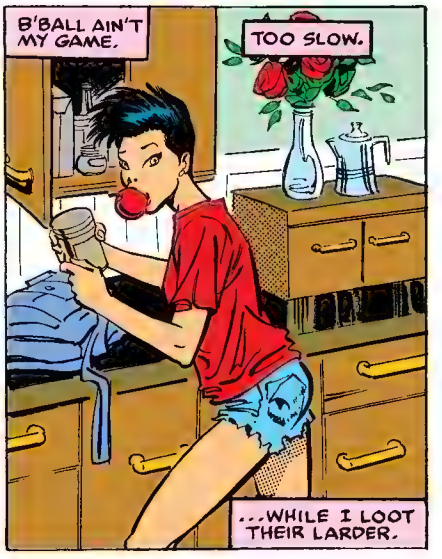
--EVEN IF THE DRESS DID FIT LIKE A TENT.
NOTHING LIKE HAVING A HEAD FOR SIN...
...AND A BODY FOR BUSINESS.
WHAT WAS THAT?!
WHO'S THERE?!?

NOTHING, OKAY?
...JUMPING OUT OF YOUR SKIN OVER SHADOWS, I MEAN REALLY, HOW UTTERLY LAME!
YOU'RE ALL ALONE, YOU SILLY SKANK...
PROBABLY JUST MY STOMACH, ANYWAY...
...REMINDING ME THAT PLAYTIME'S FUN...
...BUT THE MACHINE NEEDS FUEL.

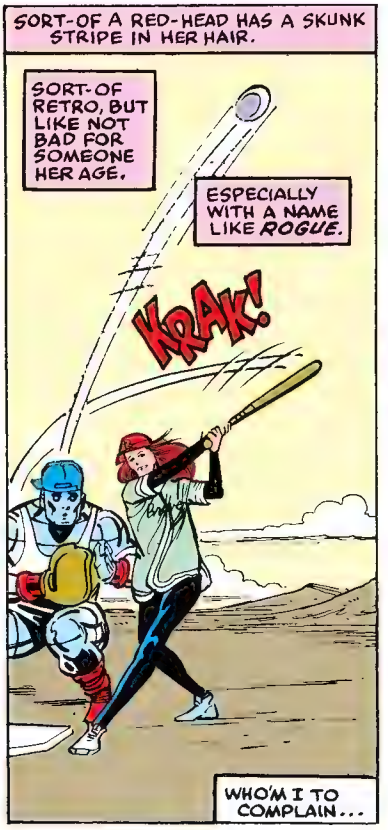

SO, ZIPPING RIGHT ALONG--
--PAST ALL THE BORING BITS THAT NOBODY WANTS TO KNOW ABOUT ANYWAY EVEN IF THERE IS ROOM TO TELL 'EM--
--I SNEAK MY WAY OUT OF THE HALL (GUESS THESE FOLKS FIGURE THEY CAN HANDLE ANY BURGLARS--HERE'S A THOUGHT, DO BURGLARS LIKE WORRY ABOUT BURGLARS OR DO THEY LIKE GET SOME SPECIAL DISPENSATION FOR BEING IN THE Y'KNOW TRADE--ANYHOW, THE STUPID DOOR WASN'T LOCKED)...

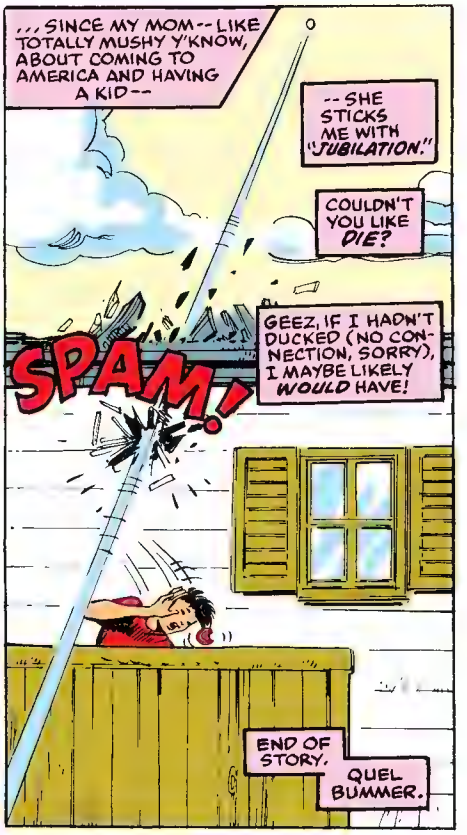
...AND GO EXPLORING.
FIND THE GALS GETTING PHYSICAL WITH SOME OKAY GUYS.

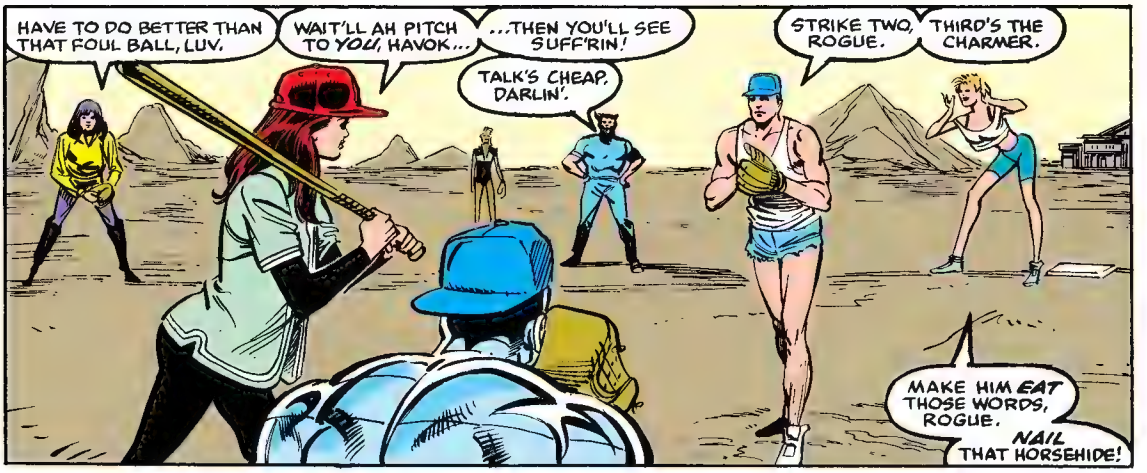

OKAY LIKE...
...SO I'M BEING COY...
...SO SUE ME MORE.
...A COUPLE WERE TOTALLY GAS!

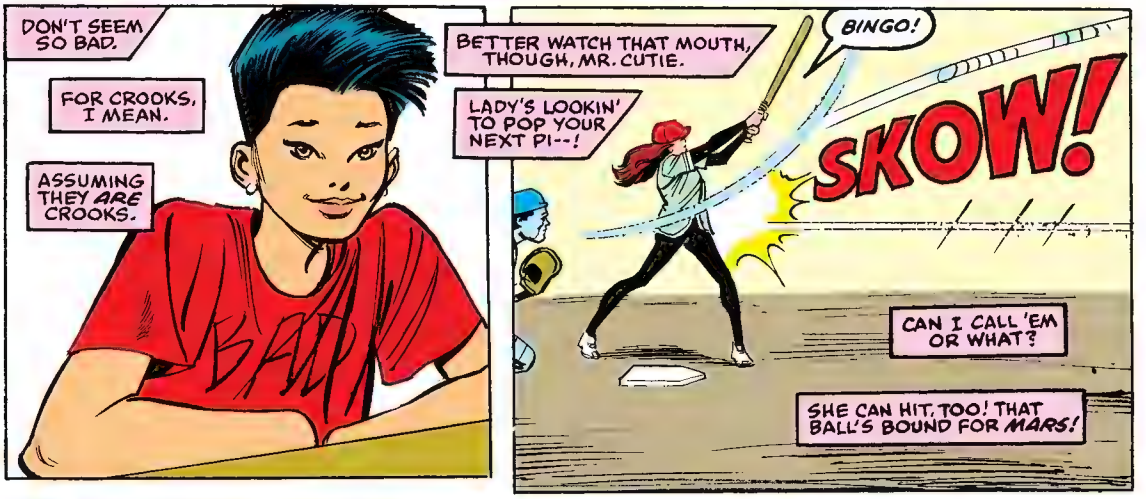

B'BALL AIN'T MY GAME.
TOO SLOW.
...WHILE I LOOT THEIR LARDER.

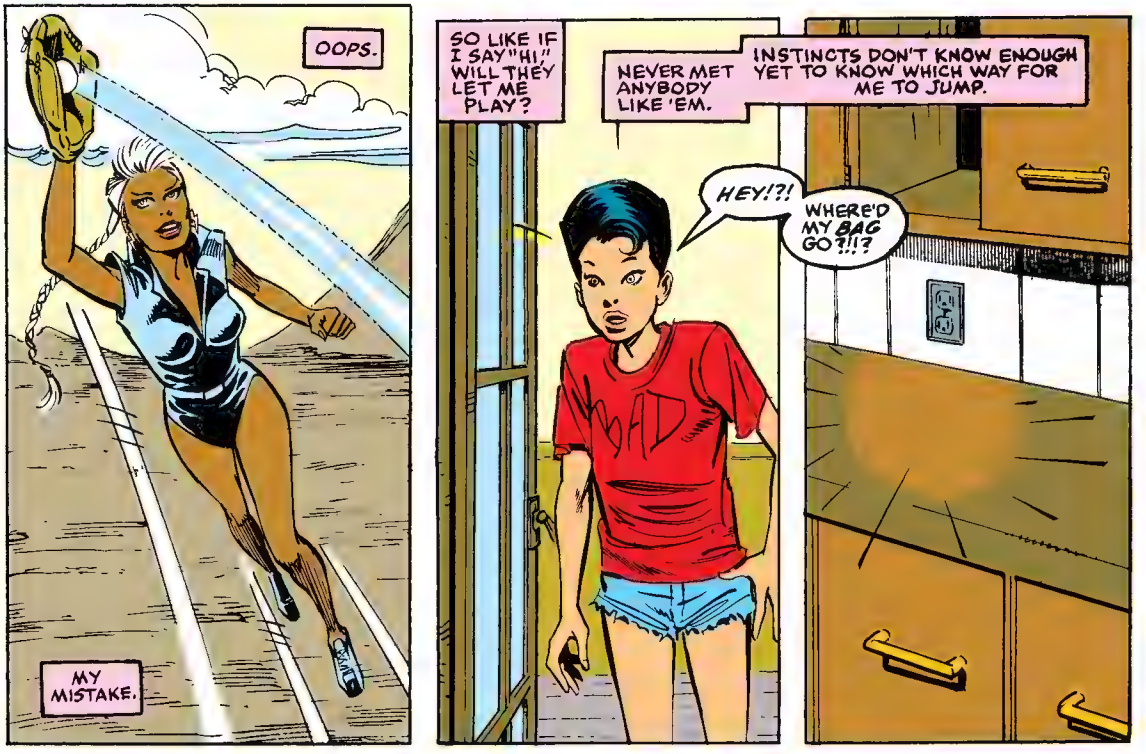
SOUNDS LIKE FUN, THOUGH.
(REALLY INTENSE SUN Y'KNOW, LIKE I'VE BEEN TO THE MOJAVE WITH THE PARENTALS BUT THIS IS LIKE SERIOUS DESERT. QUEL "THRILLING" PLACE TO LIVE, Y'KNOW, I MEAN, WHY HERE, WHEN YOU'VE GOT THE LUCRE TO BUY A COUNTRY?)

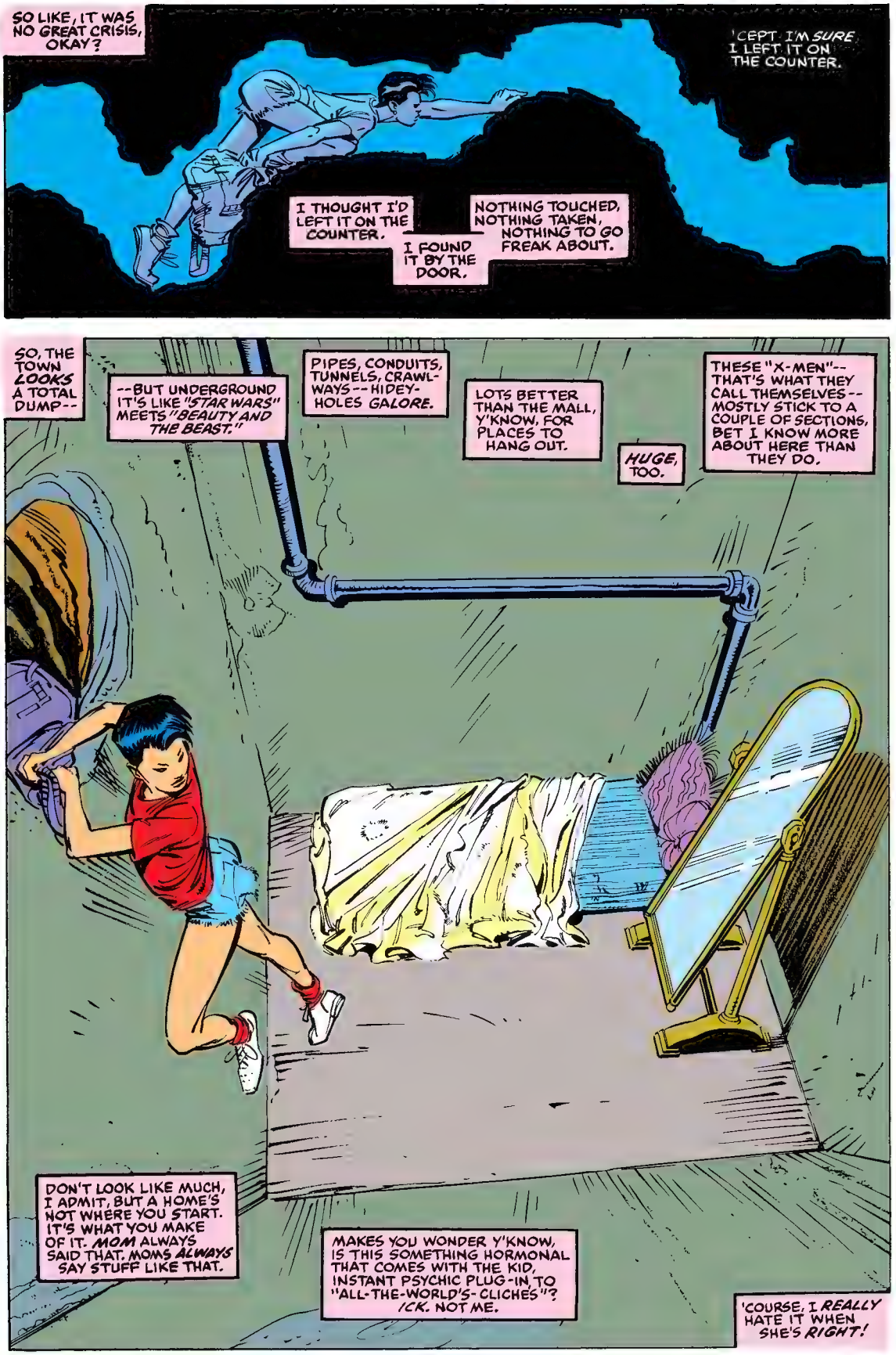

SORT-OF A RED-HEAD HAS A SKUNK STRIPE IN HER HAIR.
SORT-OF RETRO, BUT LIKE NOT BAD FOR SOMEONE HER AGE.
ESPECIALLY WITH A NAME LIKE ROGUE.
KRAK!
WHO'M I TO COMPLAIN...

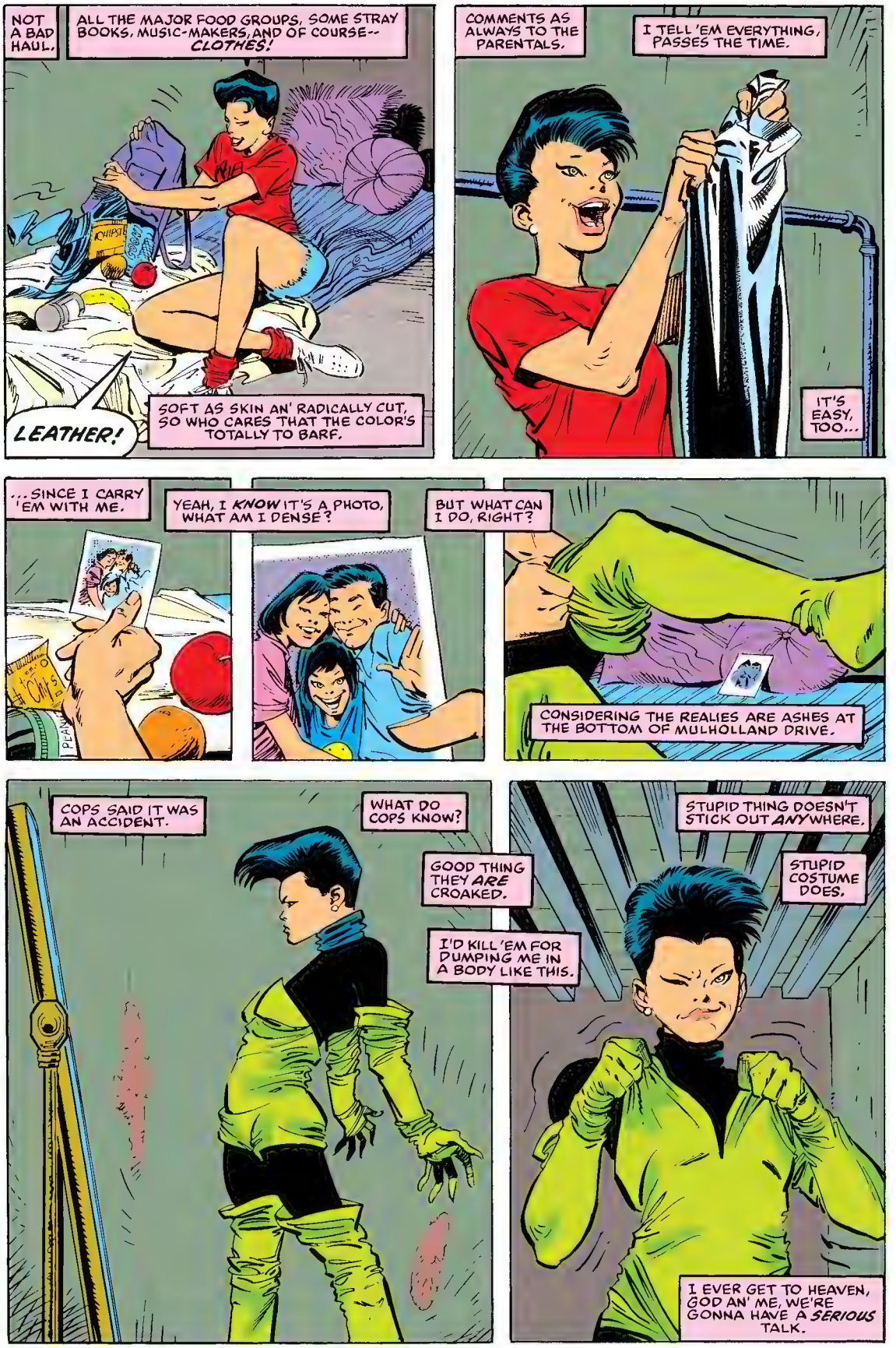

...SINCE MY MOM--LIKE TOTALLY MUSHY Y'KNOW, ABOUT COMING TO AMERICA AND HAVING A KID--
--SHE STICKS ME WITH "JUBILATION."
COULDN'T YOU LIKE DIE?
SPAM!
GEEZ, IF I HADN'T DUCKED (NO CONNECTION, SORRY), I MAYBE LIKELY WOULD HAVE!
END OF STORY.
QUEL BUMMER.


HAVE TO DO BETTER THAN THAT FOUL BALL, LUV.
WAIT'LL AH PITCH TO YOU, HAVOK...
...THEN YOU'LL SEE SUFF'RIN!
TALK'S CHEAP, DARLIN'.
STRIKE TWO, ROGUE.
THIRD'S THE CHARMER.
MAKE HIM EAT THOSE WORDS, ROGUE.
NAIL THAT HORSEHIDE!

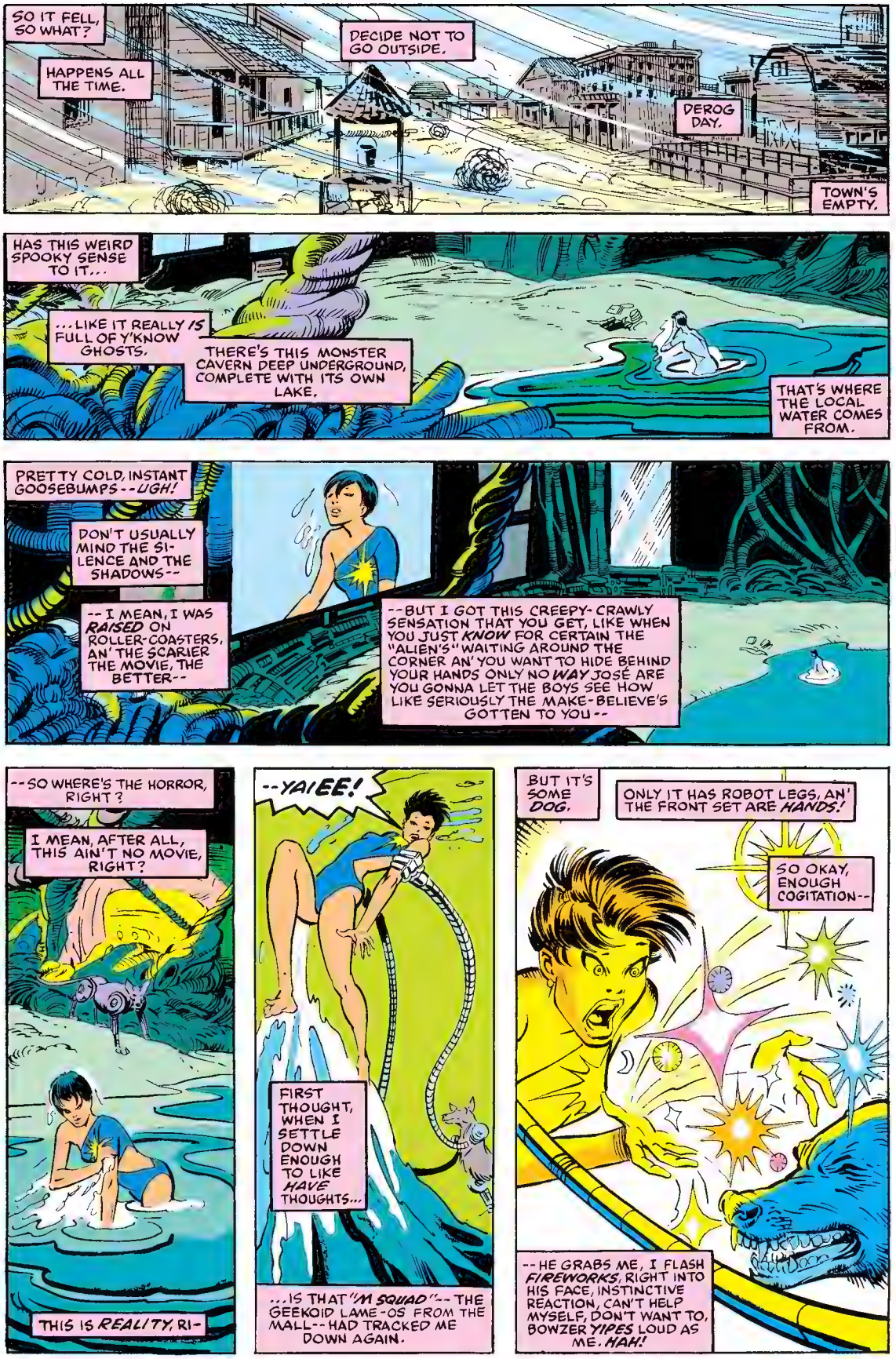

DON'T SEEM SO BAD.
FOR CROOKS, I MEAN.
ASSUMING THEY ARE CROOKS.
BAD
BETTER WATCH THAT MOUTH, THOUGH, MR. CUTIE.
LADY'S LOOKIN' TO POP YOUR NEXT PI--!
BINGO!
SKOW!
CAN I CALL 'EM OR WHAT?
SHE CAN HIT, TOO! THAT BALL'S BOUND FOR MARS!

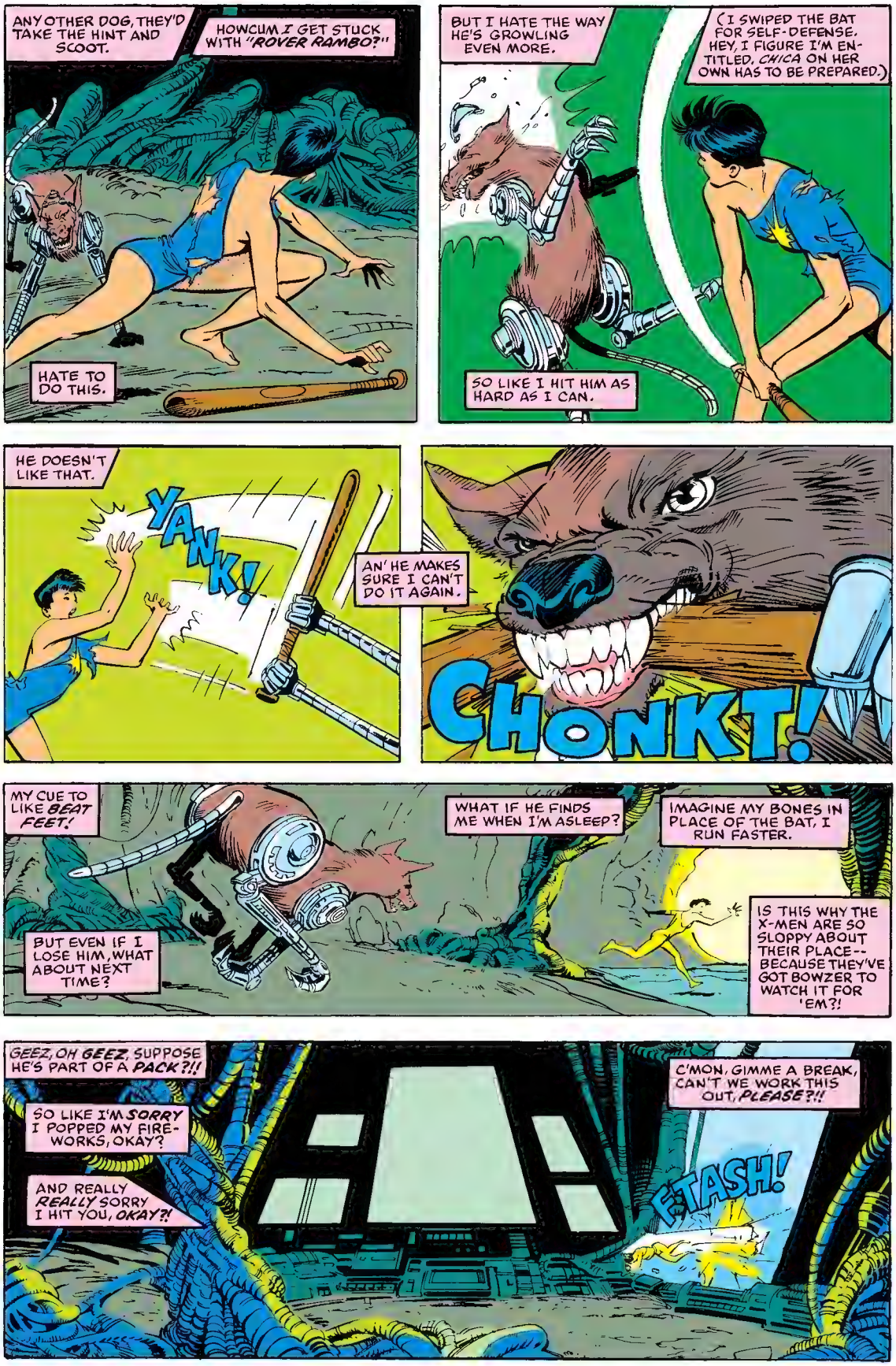

OOPS.
MY MISTAKE.
SO LIKE IF I SAY "HI" WILL THEY LET ME PLAY?
NEVER MET ANYBODY LIKE 'EM.
INSTINCTS DON'T KNOW ENOUGH YET TO KNOW WHICH WAY FOR ME TO JUMP.
HEY!?!
WHERE'D MY BAG GO?!!?
BAD

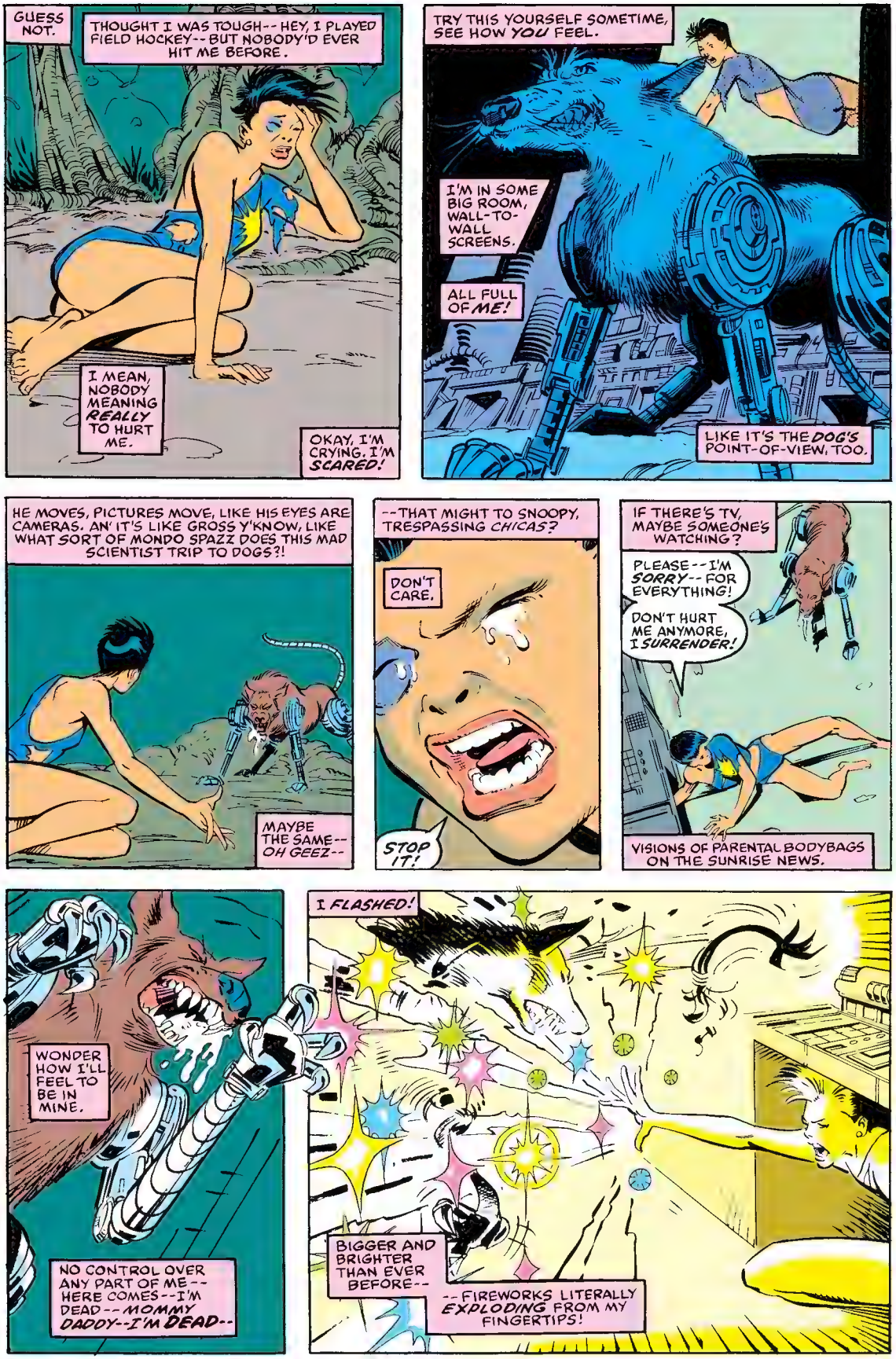

SO LIKE, IT WAS NO GREAT CRISIS, OKAY?
I THOUGHT I'D LEFT IT ON THE COUNTER.
I FOUND IT BY THE DOOR.
NOTHING TOUCHED, NOTHING TAKEN, NOTHING TO GO FREAK ABOUT.
'CEPT I'M SURE I LEFT IT ON THE COUNTER.
SO, THE TOWN LOOKS A TOTAL DUMP--
--BUT UNDERGROUND IT'S LIKE "STAR WARS" MEETS "BEAUTY AND THE BEAST."
PIPES, CONDUITS, TUNNELS, CRAWLWAYS--HIDEY-HOLES GALORE.
LOTS BETTER THAN THE MALL, Y'KNOW, FOR PLACES TO HANG OUT.
HUGE, TOO.
THESE "X-MEN"--THAT'S WHAT THEY CALL THEMSELVES--MOSTLY STICK TO A COUPLE OF SECTIONS, BET I KNOW MORE ABOUT HERE THAN THEY DO.
DON'T LOOK LIKE MUCH, I ADMIT, BUT A HOME'S NOT WHERE YOU START. IT'S WHAT YOU MAKE OF IT. MOM ALWAYS SAID THAT. MOMS ALWAYS SAY STUFF LIKE THAT.
MAKES YOU WONDER Y'KNOW, IS THIS SOMETHING HORMONAL THAT COMES WITH THE KID, INSTANT PSYCHIC PLUG-IN TO "ALL-THE-WORLD'S-CLICHÉS"? /CK. NOT ME.
'COURSE, I REALLY HATE IT WHEN SHE'S RIGHT!

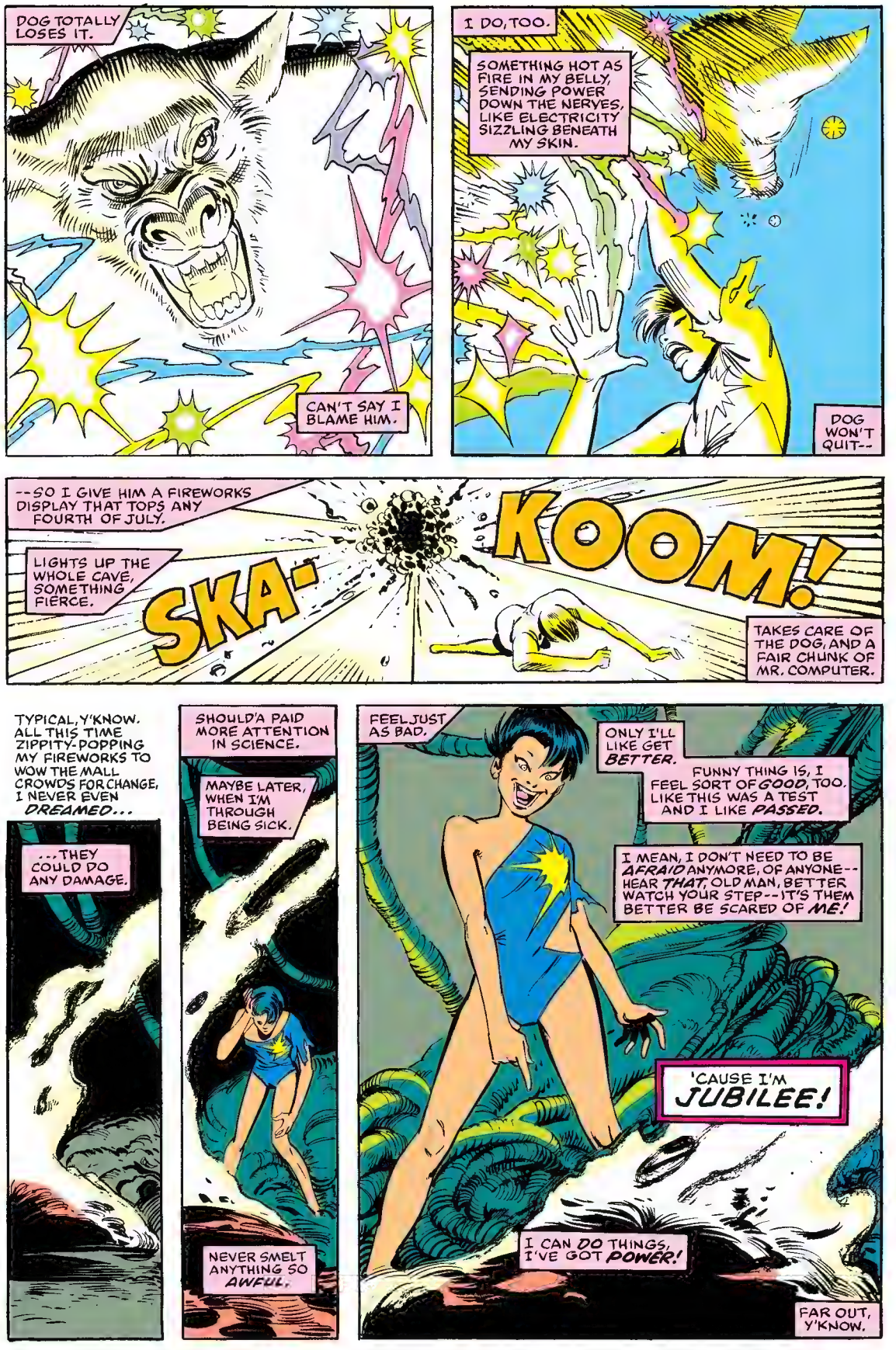

NOT A BAD HAUL.
ALL THE MAJOR FOOD GROUPS, SOME STRAY BOOKS, MUSIC-MAKERS, AND OF COURSE-- CLOTHES!
LEATHER!
SOFT AS SKIN AN' RADICALLY CUT, SO WHO CARES THAT THE COLOR'S TOTALLY TO BARF.
COMMENTS AS ALWAYS TO THE PARENTALS.
I TELL 'EM EVERYTHING, PASSES THE TIME.
IT'S EASY, TOO...
...SINCE I CARRY 'EM WITH ME.
YEAH, I KNOW IT'S A PHOTO, WHAT AM I DENSE?
BUT WHAT CAN I DO, RIGHT?
CONSIDERING THE REALIES ARE ASHES AT THE BOTTOM OF MULHOLLAND DRIVE.
COPS SAID IT WAS AN ACCIDENT.
WHAT DO COPS KNOW?
GOOD THING THEY ARE CROAKED.
I'D KILL 'EM FOR DUMPING ME IN A BODY LIKE THIS.
STUPID THING DOESN'T STICK OUT ANYWHERE.
STUPID COSTUME DOES.
I EVER GET TO HEAVEN, GOD AN' ME, WE'RE GONNA HAVE A SERIOUS TALK.

'COURSE, IT PAYS TO BE RESOURCE-FUL.
REVENGE BEING LIKE THE MOTHER OF INSPIRATION.
OR SOME-THING.
A LITTLE WORK, SOME MORE STEALING...
...NOT BAD!
CAST-OFF LEOTARD FROM DAZZLER.
TIGHTS AN' BOOTS FROM ROGUE.
GLOVES FROM THE SCARY-SHORTY, WOLVERINE.
VEST FROM STORM.
BAG FROM LONGSHOT.
LAST TOUCH, A PAIR OF THE MOST ULTIMATELY KILLER SHADES.
AND I AM READY TO ROCK AND ROLL!
WHAT A POOP, Y'KNOW--
--MAKIN' THE EFFORT TO LOOK SO TOTAL, WITH NO ONE BUT ME AN' MY PARENTALS TO APPRE--
KTRAKT!
WHATWASTHAT?!!


SO IT FELL, SO WHAT?
HAPPENS ALL THE TIME.
DECIDE NOT TO GO OUTSIDE.
DEROG DAY.
TOWN'S EMPTY.
HAS THIS WEIRD SPOOKY SENSE TO IT...
...LIKE IT REALLY IS FULL OF Y'KNOW GHOSTS.
THERE'S THIS MONSTER CAVERN DEEP UNDERGROUND, COMPLETE WITH ITS OWN LAKE.
THAT'S WHERE THE LOCAL WATER COMES FROM.
PRETTY COLD, INSTANT GOOSEBUMPS--UGH!
DON'T USUALLY MIND THE SILENCE AND THE SHADOWS--
--I MEAN, I WAS RAISED ON ROLLER-COASTERS, AN' THE SCARIER THE MOVIE, THE BETTER--
--BUT I GOT THIS CREEPY-CRAWLY SENSATION THAT YOU GET, LIKE WHEN YOU JUST KNOW FOR CERTAIN THE "ALIEN'S" WAITING AROUND THE CORNER AN' YOU WANT TO HIDE BEHIND YOUR HANDS ONLY NO WAY JOSÉ ARE YOU GONNA LET THE BOYS SEE HOW LIKE SERIOUSLY THE MAKE-BELIEVE'S GOTTEN TO YOU--
--SO WHERE'S THE HORROR, RIGHT?
I MEAN, AFTER ALL, THIS AIN'T NO MOVIE, RIGHT?
THIS IS REALITY, RI-
--YAIEE!
FIRST THOUGHT, WHEN I SETTLE DOWN ENOUGH TO LIKE HAVE THOUGHTS...
...IS THAT "M SQUAD"-- THE GEEKOID LAME-OS FROM THE MALL-- HAD TRACKED ME DOWN AGAIN.
BUT IT'S SOME DOG.
ONLY IT HAS ROBOT LEGS, AN' THE FRONT SET ARE HANDS!
SO OKAY, ENOUGH COGITATION--
--HE GRABS ME, I FLASH FIREWORKS, RIGHT INTO HIS FACE, INSTINCTIVE REACTION, CAN'T HELP MYSELF, DON'T WANT TO, BOWZER YIPES LOUD AS ME. HAH!


ANY OTHER DOG, THEY'D TAKE THE HINT AND SCOOT.
HOWCUM I GET STUCK WITH "ROVER RAMBO?"
HATE TO DO THIS.
BUT I HATE THE WAY HE'S GROWLING EVEN MORE.
(I SWIPED THE BAT FOR SELF-DEFENSE. HEY, I FIGURE I'M ENTITLED. CHICA ON HER OWN HAS TO BE PREPARED.)
SO LIKE I HIT HIM AS HARD AS I CAN.
HE DOESN'T LIKE THAT.
YANK!
AN' HE MAKES SURE I CAN'T DO IT AGAIN.
CHONKT!
MY CUE TO LIKE BEAT FEET!
WHAT IF HE FINDS ME WHEN I'M ASLEEP?
IMAGINE MY BONES IN PLACE OF THE BAT, I RUN FASTER.
BUT EVEN IF I LOSE HIM, WHAT ABOUT NEXT TIME?
IS THIS WHY THE X-MEN ARE SO SLOPPY ABOUT THEIR PLACE-- BECAUSE THEY'VE GOT BOWZER TO WATCH IT FOR 'EM?!
GEEZ, OH GEEZ, SUPPOSE HE'S PART OF A PACK?!!
SO LIKE I'M SORRY I POPPED MY FIRE-WORKS, OKAY?
AND REALLY REALLY SORRY I HIT YOU, OKAY?!
C'MON, GIMME A BREAK, CAN'T WE WORK THIS OUT, PLEASE?!!
FTASH!


GUESS NOT.
THOUGHT I WAS TOUGH-- HEY, I PLAYED FIELD HOCKEY-- BUT NOBODY'D EVER HIT ME BEFORE.
I MEAN, NOBODY MEANING *REALLY* TO HURT ME.
OKAY, I'M CRYING. I'M *SCARED!*
TRY THIS YOURSELF SOMETIME, SEE HOW *YOU* FEEL.
I'M IN SOME BIG ROOM, WALL-TO-WALL SCREENS.
ALL FULL OF *ME!*
LIKE IT'S THE *DOG'S* POINT-OF-VIEW, TOO.
HE MOVES, PICTURES MOVE, LIKE HIS EYES ARE CAMERAS. AN' IT'S LIKE GROSS Y'KNOW, LIKE WHAT SORT OF MONDO SPAZZ DOES THIS MAD SCIENTIST TRIP TO DOGS?!
MAYBE THE SAME-- OH GEEZ--
--THAT MIGHT TO SNOOPY, TRESPASSING *CHICAS?*
DON'T CARE.
STOP IT!
IF THERE'S TV, MAYBE SOMEONE'S WATCHING?
PLEASE-- I'M *SORRY*-- FOR EVERYTHING!
DON'T HURT ME ANYMORE, I *SURRENDER!*
VISIONS OF PARENTAL BODYBAGS ON THE SUNRISE NEWS.
WONDER HOW I'LL FEEL TO BE IN MINE.
NO CONTROL OVER ANY PART OF ME-- HERE COMES-- I'M DEAD-- *MOMMY DADDY-- I'M DEAD--*
I FLASHED!
BIGGER AND BRIGHTER THAN EVER BEFORE--
--FIREWORKS LITERALLY *EXPLODING* FROM MY FINGERTIPS!


DOG TOTALLY LOSES IT.
CAN'T SAY I BLAME HIM.
I DO, TOO.
SOMETHING HOT AS FIRE IN MY BELLY, SENDING POWER DOWN THE NERVES, LIKE ELECTRICITY SIZZLING BENEATH MY SKIN.
DOG WON'T QUIT--
--SO I GIVE HIM A FIREWORKS DISPLAY THAT TOPS ANY FOURTH OF JULY.
LIGHTS UP THE WHOLE CAVE, SOMETHING FIERCE.
SKA-
KOOM!
TAKES CARE OF THE DOG, AND A FAIR CHUNK OF MR. COMPUTER.
TYPICAL, Y'KNOW. ALL THIS TIME ZIPPITY-POPPING MY FIREWORKS TO WOW THE MALL CROWDS FOR CHANGE, I NEVER EVEN DREAMED...
...THEY COULD DO ANY DAMAGE.
SHOULD'A PAID MORE ATTENTION IN SCIENCE.
MAYBE LATER, WHEN I'M THROUGH BEING SICK.
NEVER SMELT ANYTHING SO AWFUL.
FEEL JUST AS BAD.
ONLY I'LL LIKE GET BETTER.
FUNNY THING IS, I FEEL SORT OF GOOD, TOO. LIKE THIS WAS A TEST AND I LIKE PASSED.
I MEAN, I DON'T NEED TO BE AFRAID ANYMORE, OF ANYONE--HEAR THAT, OLD MAN, BETTER WATCH YOUR STEP--IT'S THEM BETTER BE SCARED OF ME!
'CAUSE I'M JUBILEE!
I CAN DO THINGS, I'VE GOT POWER!
FAR OUT, Y'KNOW.

MARVEL
THE UNCANNY
X-MEN
TM
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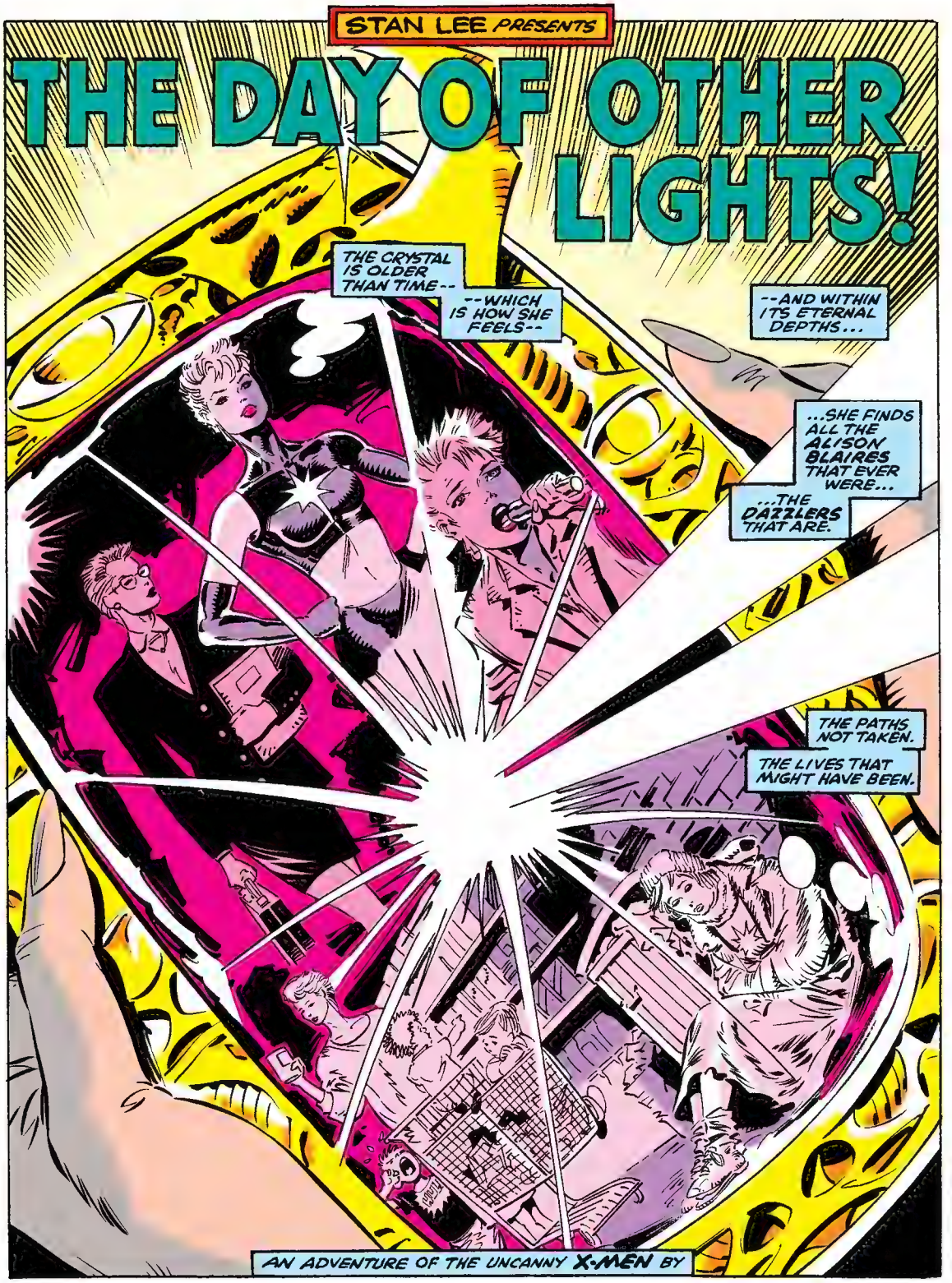
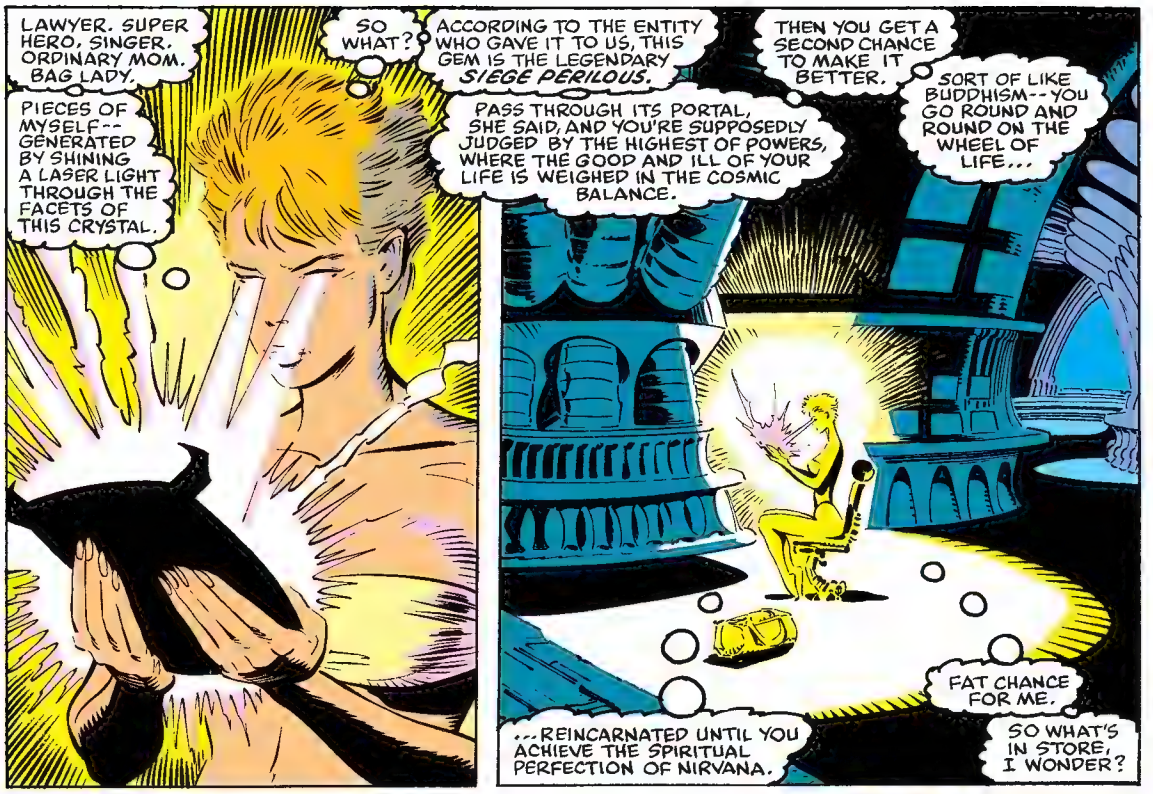
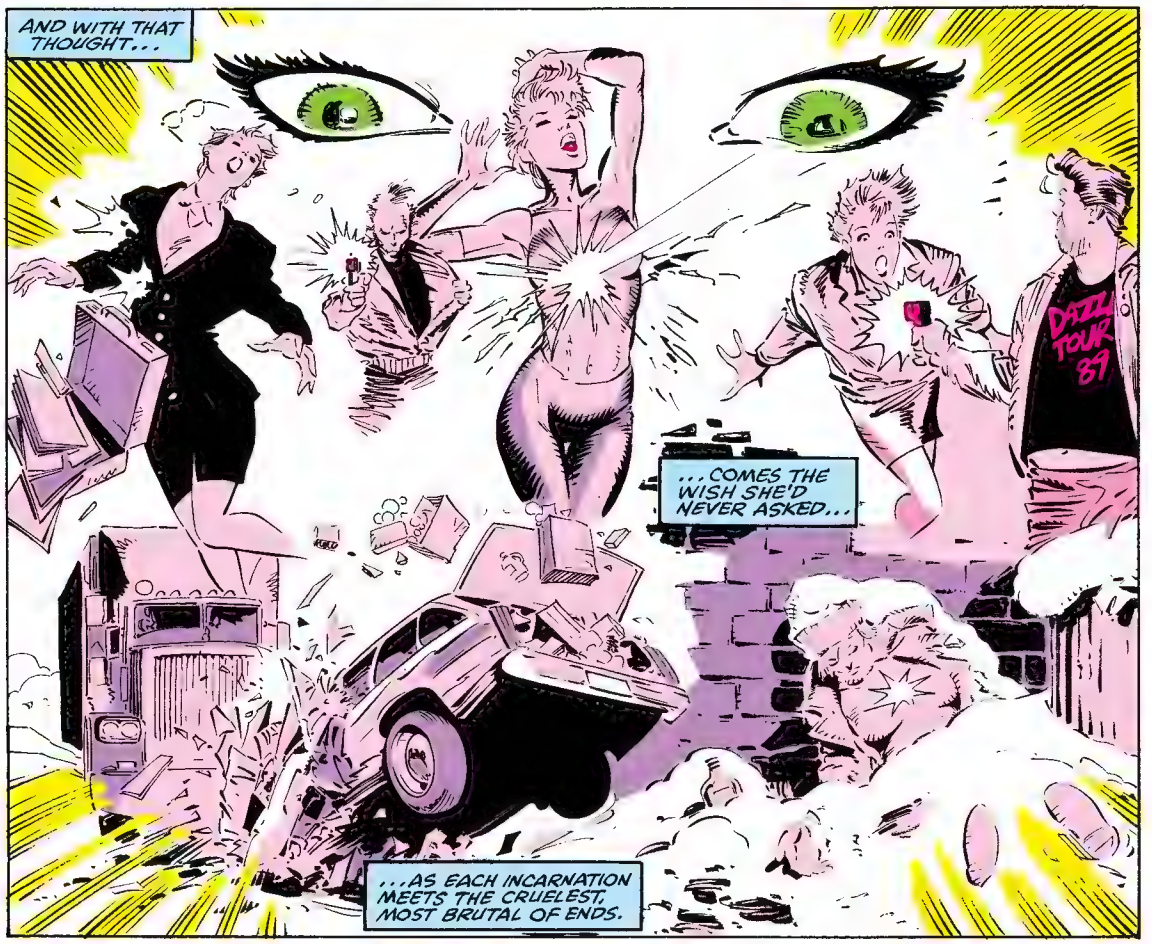
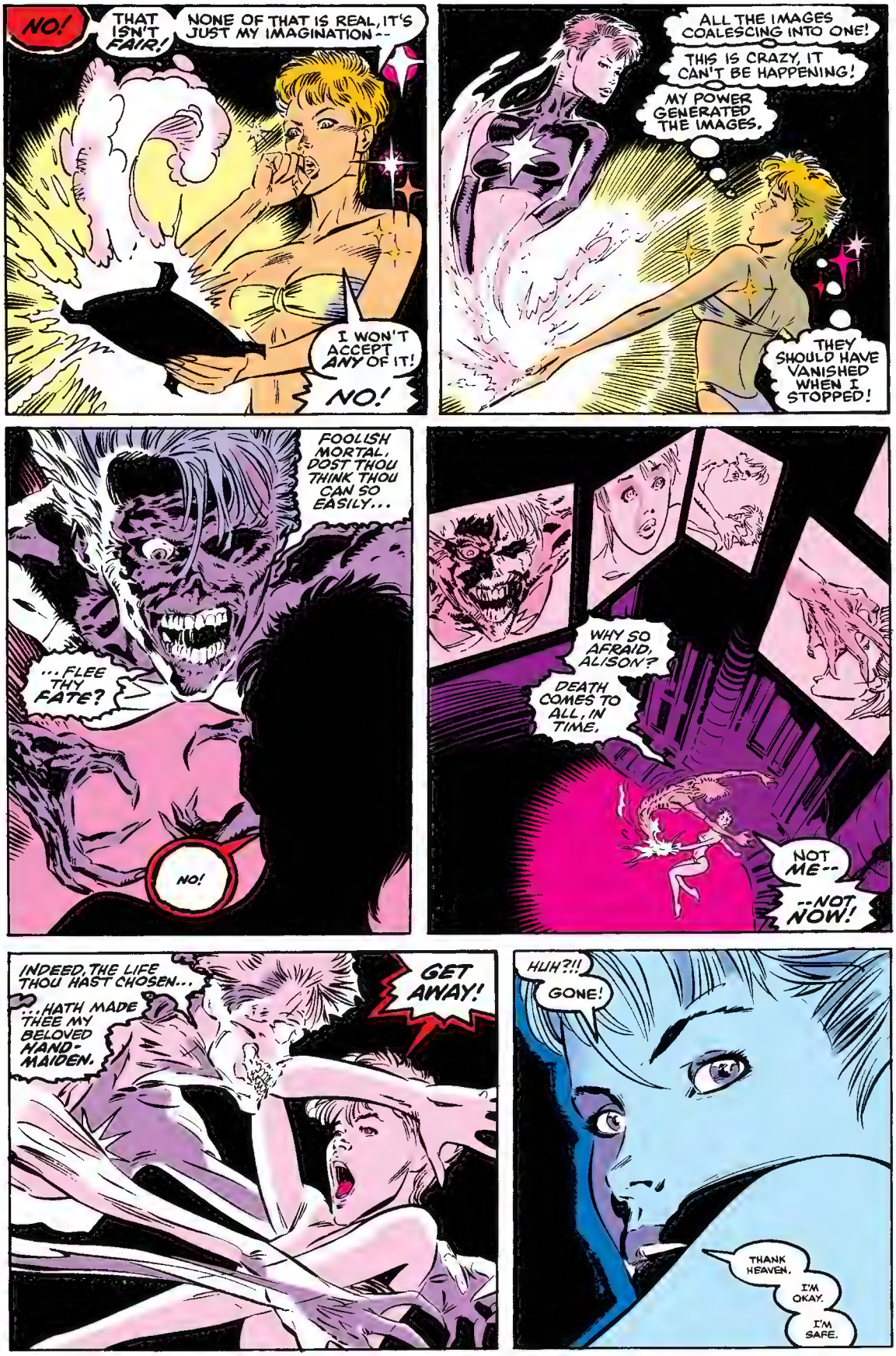
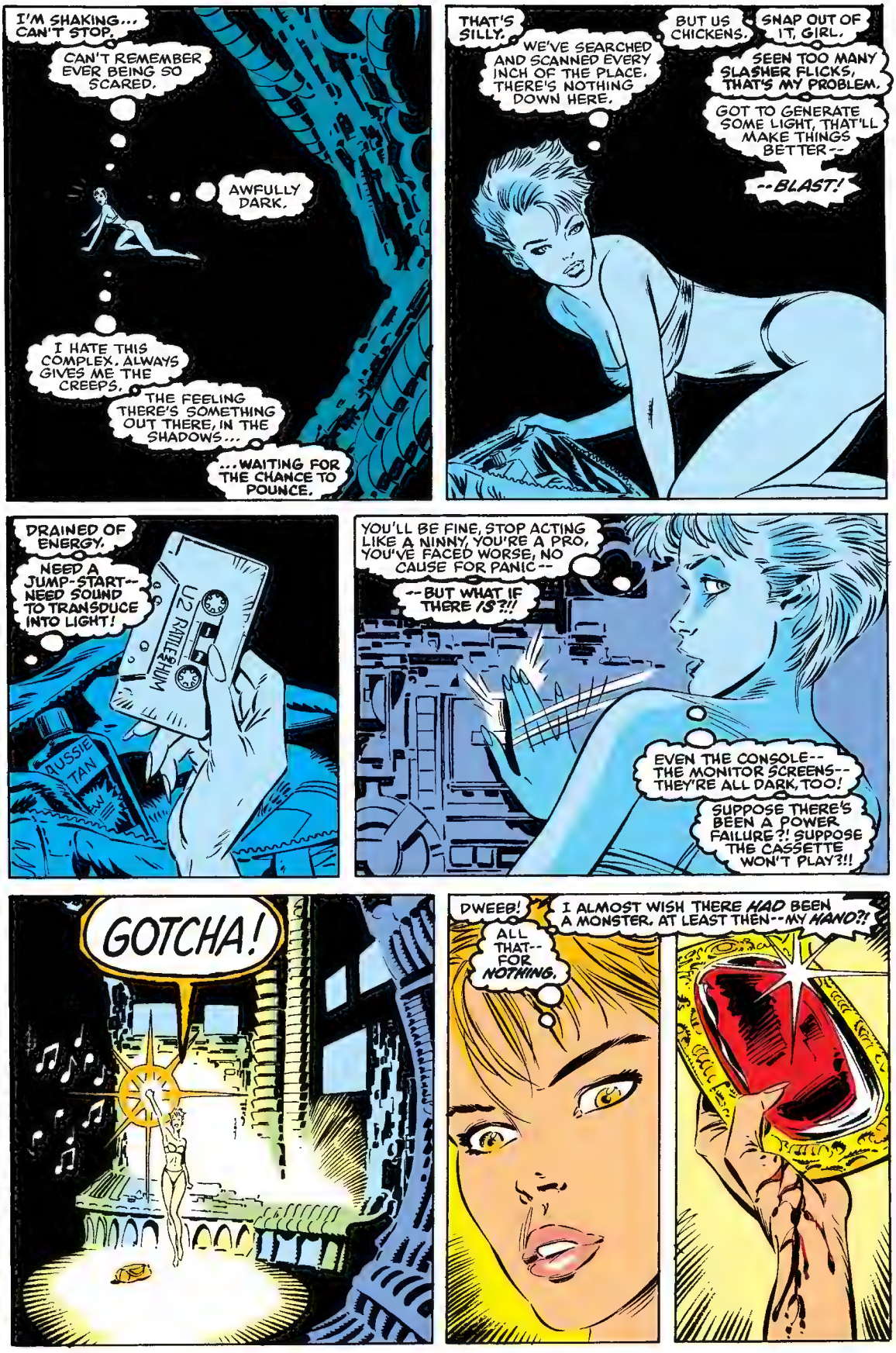
JUL
02461
APPROVED BY THE COMICS CODE
AUTHORITY
ENTER--
THE
MASTER MOLD!
SILVESTRI / GREEN

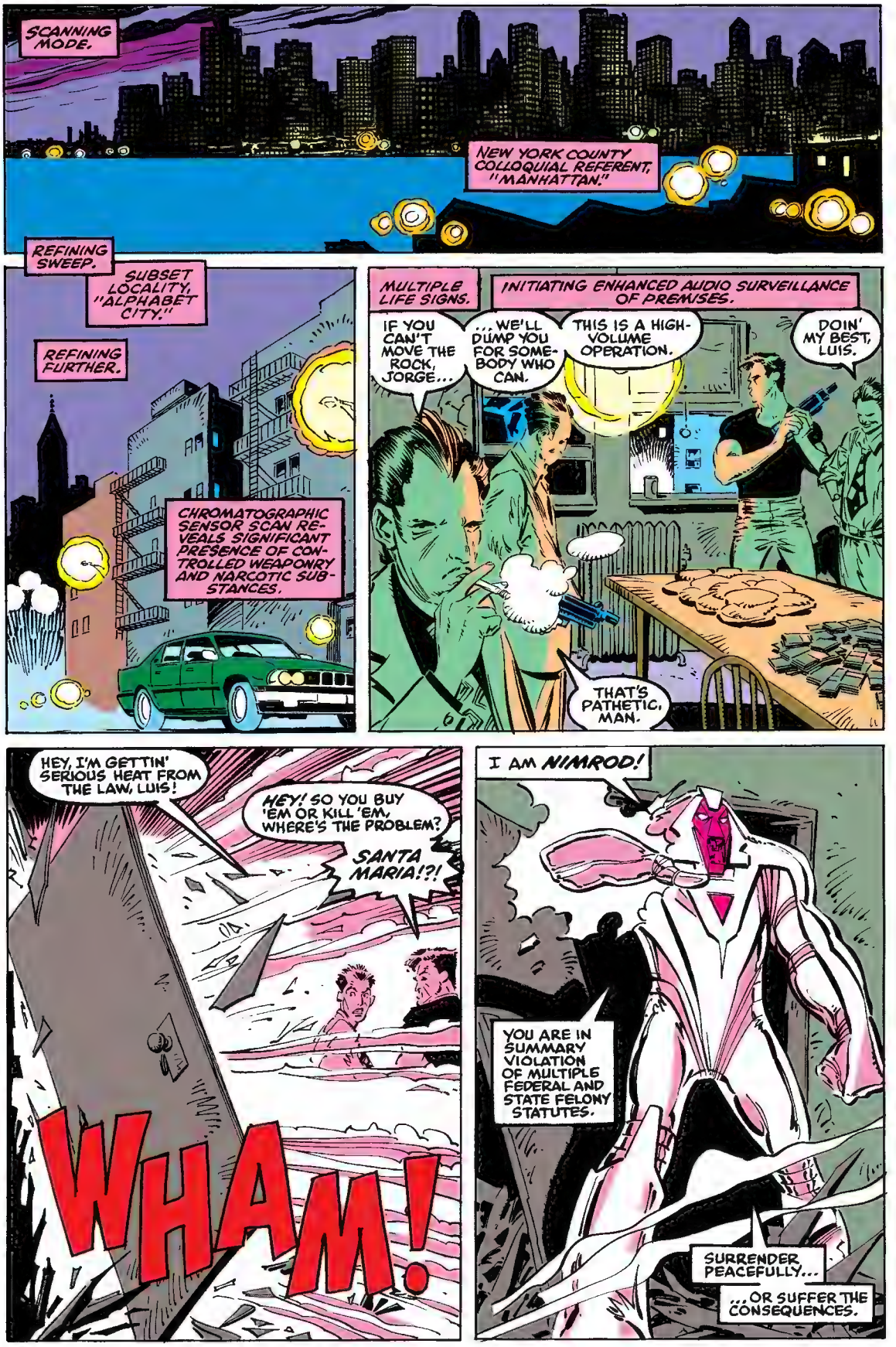

STAN LEE PRESENTS
THE DAY OF OTHER LIGHTS!
THE CRYSTAL IS OLDER THAN TIME--
--WHICH IS HOW SHE FEELS--
--AND WITHIN ITS ETERNAL DEPTHS...
...SHE FINDS ALL THE ALISON BLAIRES THAT EVER WERE...
...THE DAZZLERS THAT ARE.
THE PATHS NOT TAKEN.
THE LIVES THAT MIGHT HAVE BEEN.
AN ADVENTURE OF THE UNCANNY X-MEN BY
CHRIS CLAREMONT WRITER
MARK SILVESTRI PENCILER
DAN GREEN INKER
JOE ROSEN LETTERER
GLYNIS OLIVER COLORIST
BOB HARRAS EDITOR
TOM DeFALCO EDITOR IN CHIEF

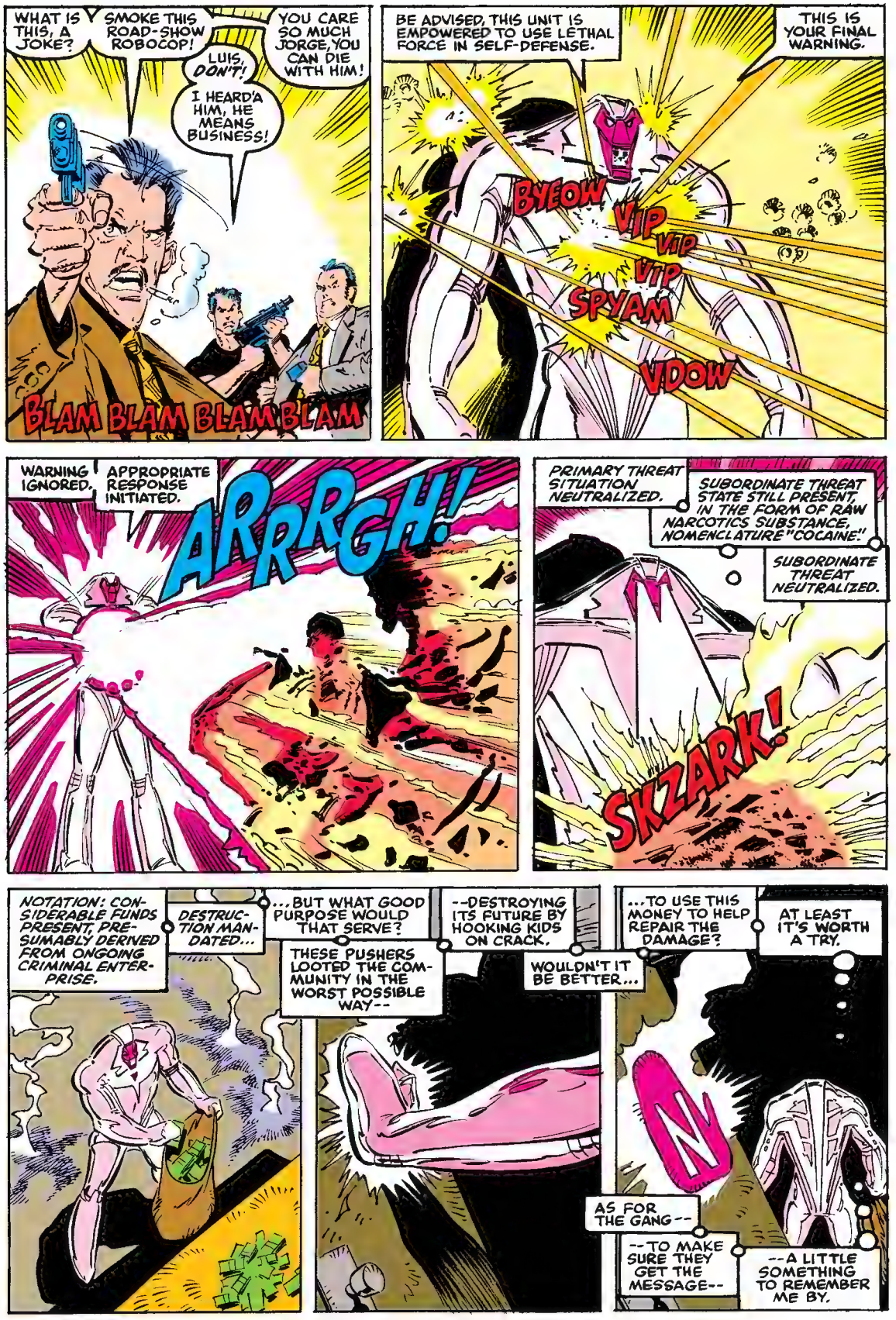

LAWYER. SUPER HERO, SINGER. ORDINARY MOM. BAG LADY.
PIECES OF MYSELF--GENERATED BY SHINING A LASER LIGHT THROUGH THE FACETS OF THIS CRYSTAL.
SO WHAT?
ACCORDING TO THE ENTITY WHO GAVE IT TO US, THIS GEM IS THE LEGENDARY SIEGE PERILOUS.
PASS THROUGH ITS PORTAL, SHE SAID, AND YOU'RE SUPPOSEDLY JUDGED BY THE HIGHEST OF POWERS, WHERE THE GOOD AND ILL OF YOUR LIFE IS WEIGHED IN THE COSMIC BALANCE.
THEN YOU GET A SECOND CHANCE TO MAKE IT BETTER.
SORT OF LIKE BUDDHISM--YOU GO ROUND AND ROUND ON THE WHEEL OF LIFE...
...REINCARNATED UNTIL YOU ACHIEVE THE SPIRITUAL PERFECTION OF NIRVANA.
FAT CHANCE FOR ME.
SO WHAT'S IN STORE, I WONDER?


AND WITH THAT THOUGHT...
...COMES THE WISH SHE'D NEVER ASKED...
...AS EACH INCARNATION MEETS THE CRUELEST, MOST BRUTAL OF ENDS.
DAZZLER TOUR '89

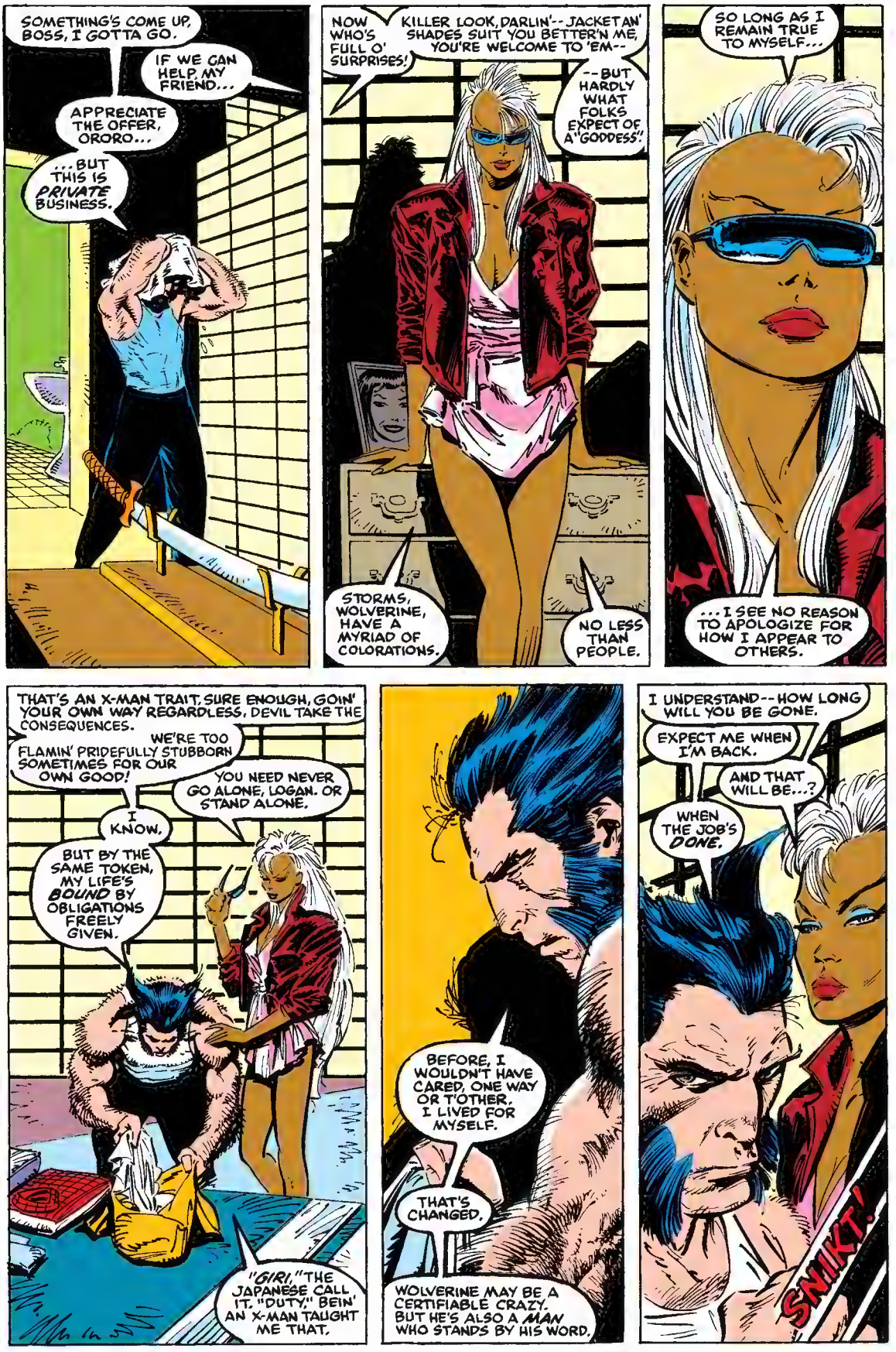

NO!
THAT ISN'T FAIR!
NONE OF THAT IS REAL, IT'S JUST MY IMAGINATION--
I WON'T ACCEPT ANY OF IT!
NO!
ALL THE IMAGES COALESCING INTO ONE!
THIS IS CRAZY, IT CAN'T BE HAPPENING!
MY POWER GENERATED THE IMAGES.
THEY SHOULD HAVE VANISHED WHEN I STOPPED!
FOOLISH MORTAL, DOST THOU THINK THOU CAN SO EASILY...
...FLEE THY FATE?
NO!
WHY SO AFRAID, ALISON?
DEATH COMES TO ALL, IN TIME.
NOT ME--
--NOT NOW!
INDEED, THE LIFE THOU HAST CHOSEN...
...HATH MADE THEE MY BELOVED HAND-MAIDEN.
GET AWAY!
HUH?!!
GONE!
THANK HEAVEN.
I'M OKAY.
I'M SAFE.

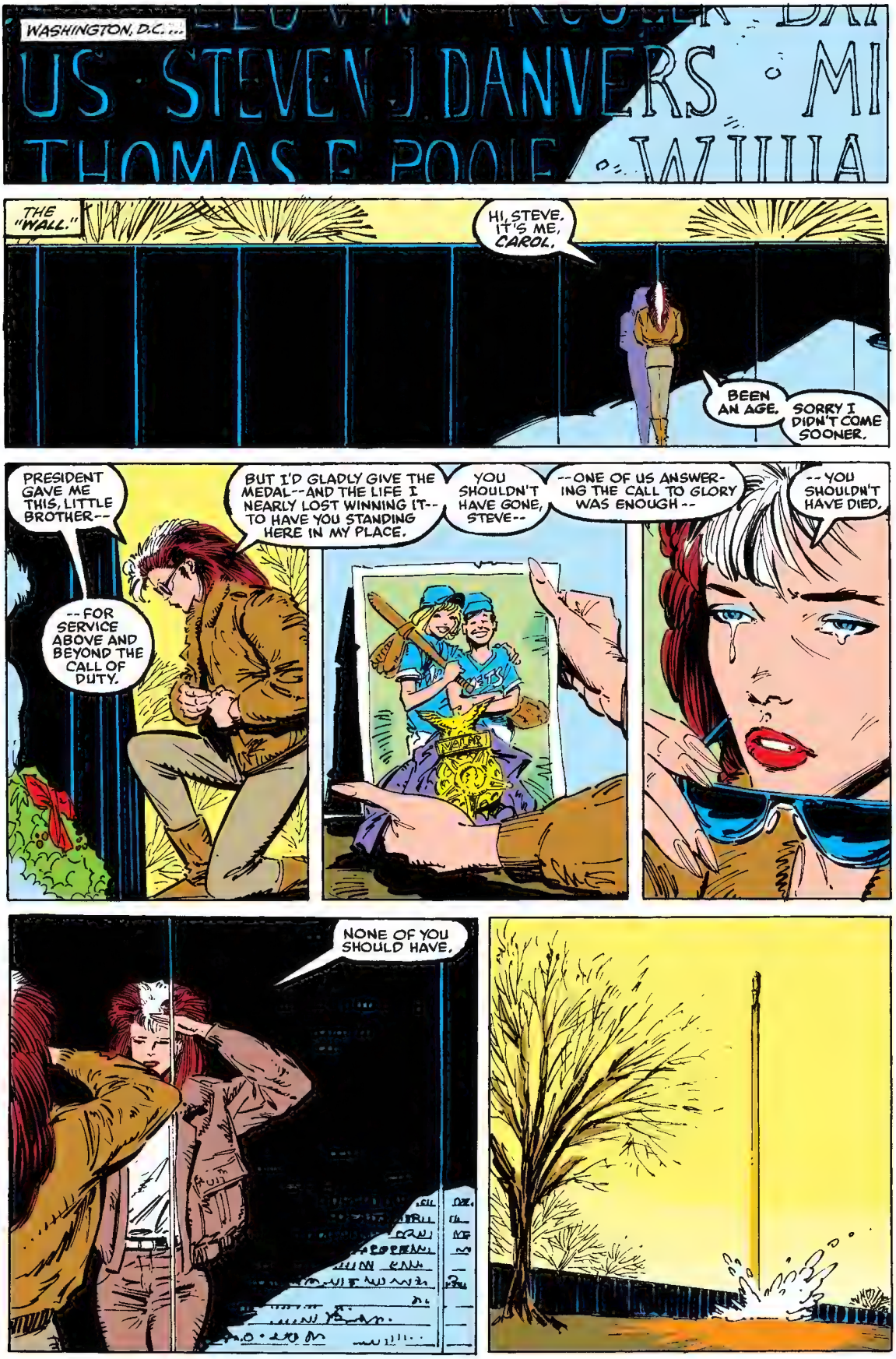

I'M SHAKING... CAN'T STOP.
CAN'T REMEMBER EVER BEING SO SCARED.
AWFULLY DARK.
I HATE THIS COMPLEX. ALWAYS GIVES ME THE CREEPS.
THE FEELING THERE'S SOMETHING OUT THERE, IN THE SHADOWS...
...WAITING FOR THE CHANCE TO POUNCE.
THAT'S SILLY.
WE'VE SEARCHED AND SCANNED EVERY INCH OF THE PLACE. THERE'S NOTHING DOWN HERE.
BUT US CHICKENS.
SNAP OUT OF IT, GIRL.
SEEN TOO MANY SLASHER FLICKS, THAT'S MY PROBLEM.
GOT TO GENERATE SOME LIGHT, THAT'LL MAKE THINGS BETTER--
--BLAST!
DRAINED OF ENERGY.
NEED A JUMP-START-- NEED SOUND TO TRANSDUCE INTO LIGHT!
C2 RAMLE2HUM
AUSSIE TAN
YOU'LL BE FINE, STOP ACTING LIKE A NINNY, YOU'RE A PRO, YOU'VE FACED WORSE, NO CAUSE FOR PANIC--
--BUT WHAT IF THERE IS?!!
EVEN THE CONSOLE-- THE MONITOR SCREENS-- THEY'RE ALL DARK, TOO!
SUPPOSE THERE'S BEEN A POWER FAILURE?! SUPPOSE THE CASSETTE WON'T PLAY?!!
GOTCHA!
DWEEB!
ALL THAT-- FOR NOTHING.
I ALMOST WISH THERE HAD BEEN A MONSTER. AT LEAST THEN--MY HAND?!

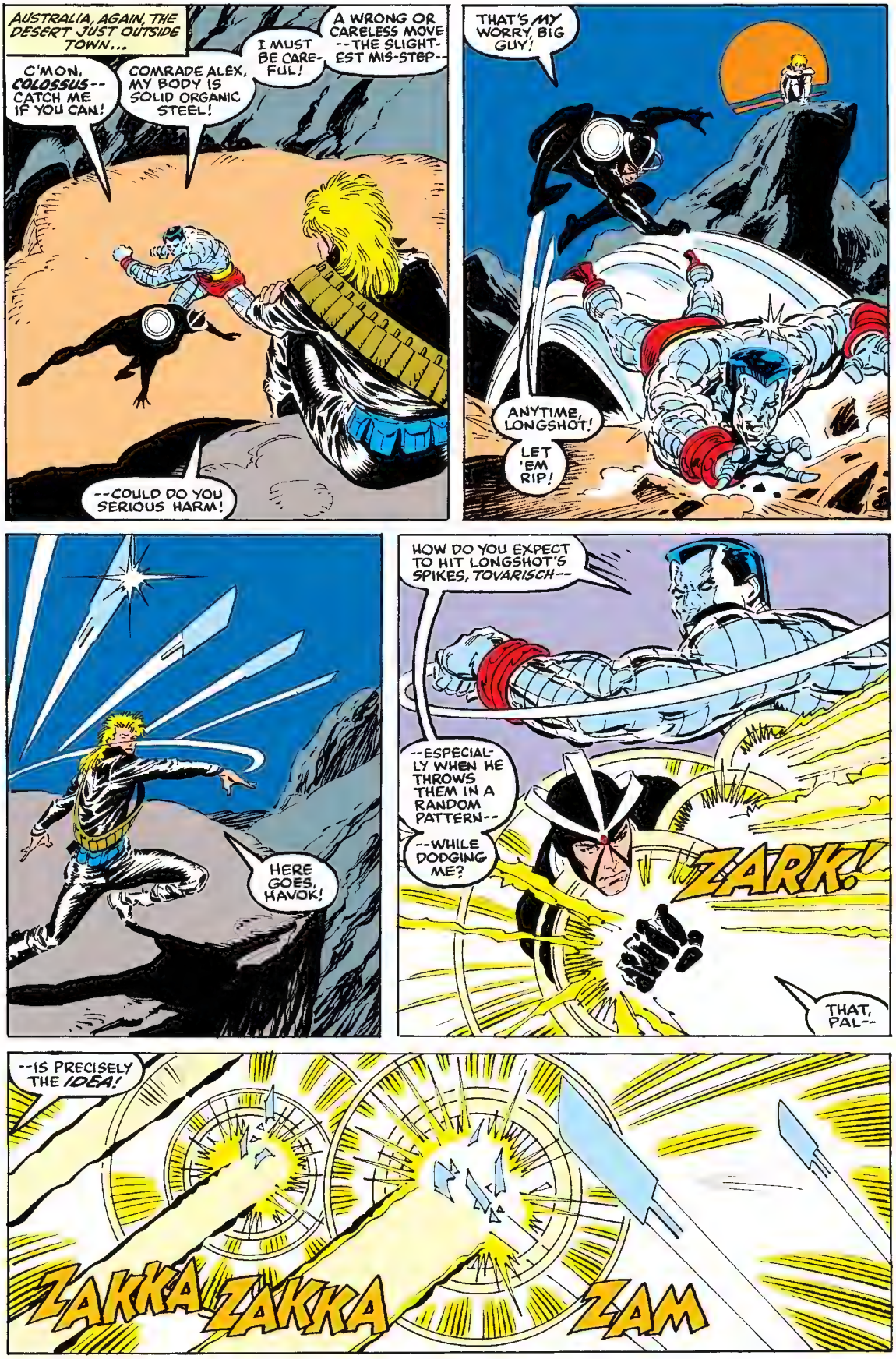

SCANNING MODE.
NEW YORK COUNTY COLLOQUIAL REFERENT, "MANHATTAN."
REFINING SWEEP.
SUBSET LOCALITY, "ALPHABET CITY."
REFINING FURTHER.
CHROMATOGRAPHIC SENSOR SCAN REVEALS SIGNIFICANT PRESENCE OF CONTROLLED WEAPONRY AND NARCOTIC SUBSTANCES.
MULTIPLE LIFE SIGNS.
INITIATING ENHANCED AUDIO SURVEILLANCE OF PREMISES.
IF YOU CAN'T MOVE THE ROCK, JORGE...
...WE'LL DUMP YOU FOR SOMEBODY WHO CAN.
THIS IS A HIGH-VOLUME OPERATION.
DOIN' MY BEST, LUIS.
THAT'S PATHETIC, MAN.
HEY, I'M GETTIN' SERIOUS HEAT FROM THE LAW, LUIS!
HEY! SO YOU BUY 'EM OR KILL 'EM, WHERE'S THE PROBLEM?
SANTA MARIA!?!
WHAM!
I AM NIMROD!
YOU ARE IN SUMMARY VIOLATION OF MULTIPLE FEDERAL AND STATE FELONY STATUTES.
SURRENDER PEACEFULLY...
...OR SUFFER THE CONSEQUENCES.

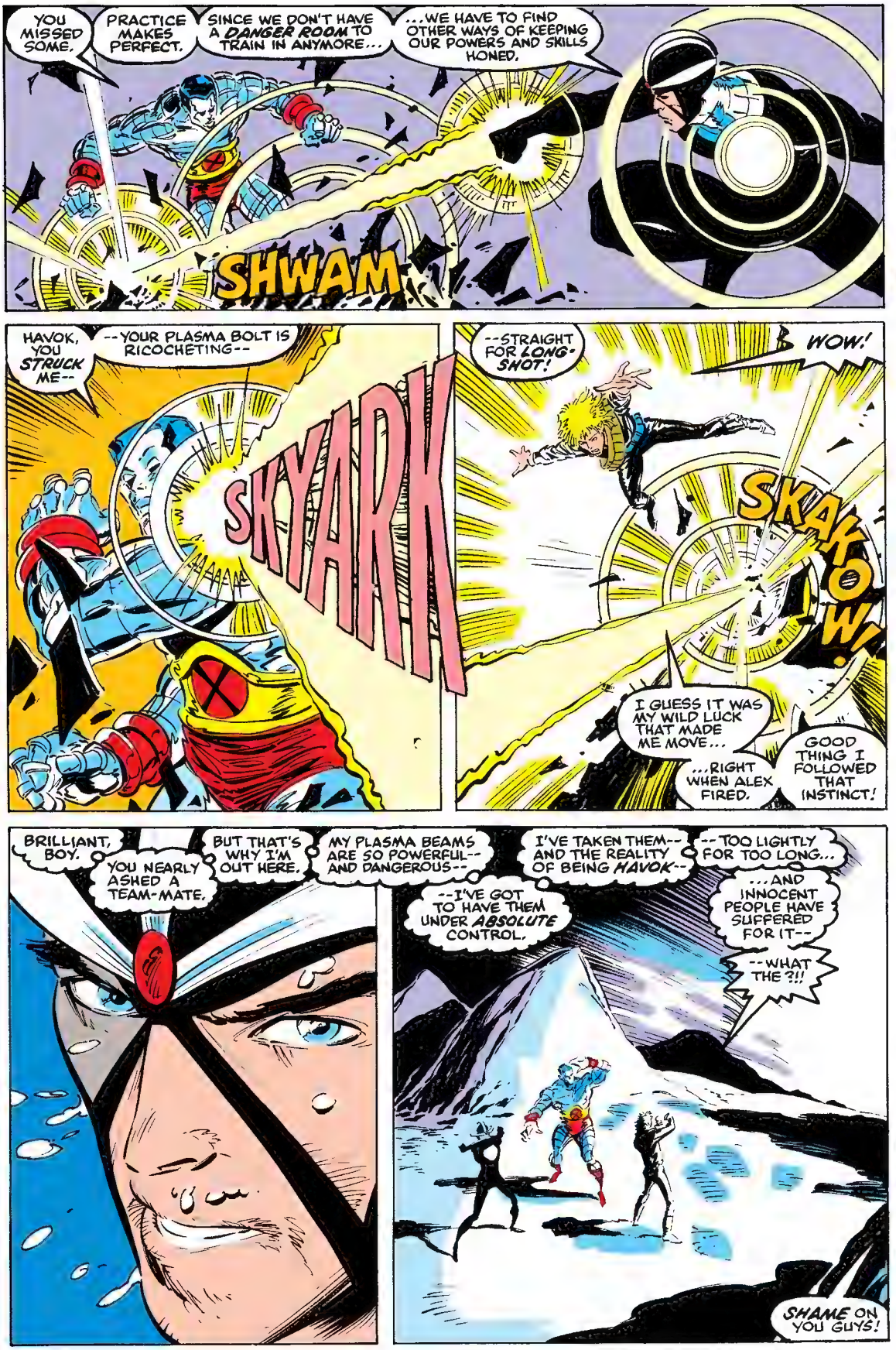

WHAT IS THIS, A JOKE?
SMOKE THIS ROAD-SHOW ROBOCOP!
LUIS, DON'T!
I HEARD'A HIM, HE MEANS BUSINESS!
YOU CARE SO MUCH JORGE, YOU CAN DIE WITH HIM!
BLAM BLAM BLAM BLAM
BE ADVISED, THIS UNIT IS EMPOWERED TO USE LETHAL FORCE IN SELF-DEFENSE.
THIS IS YOUR FINAL WARNING.
BYEOW
VIP
VIP
VIP
SPYAM
VDOW
WARNING IGNORED.
APPROPRIATE RESPONSE INITIATED.
ARRRGH!
PRIMARY THREAT SITUATION NEUTRALIZED.
SUBORDINATE THREAT STATE STILL PRESENT, IN THE FORM OF RAW NARCOTICS SUBSTANCE, NOMENCLATURE "COCAINE!"
SUBORDINATE THREAT NEUTRALIZED.
SKZARK!
NOTATION: CONSIDERABLE FUNDS PRESENT, PRESUMABLY DERIVED FROM ONGOING CRIMINAL ENTERPRISE.
DESTRUCTION MANDATED...
...BUT WHAT GOOD PURPOSE WOULD THAT SERVE?
THESE PUSHERS LOOTED THE COMMUNITY IN THE WORST POSSIBLE WAY--
--DESTROYING ITS FUTURE BY HOOKING KIDS ON CRACK.
WOULDN'T IT BE BETTER...
...TO USE THIS MONEY TO HELP REPAIR THE DAMAGE?
AT LEAST IT'S WORTH A TRY.
AS FOR THE GANG--
--TO MAKE SURE THEY GET THE MESSAGE--
--A LITTLE SOMETHING TO REMEMBER ME BY.

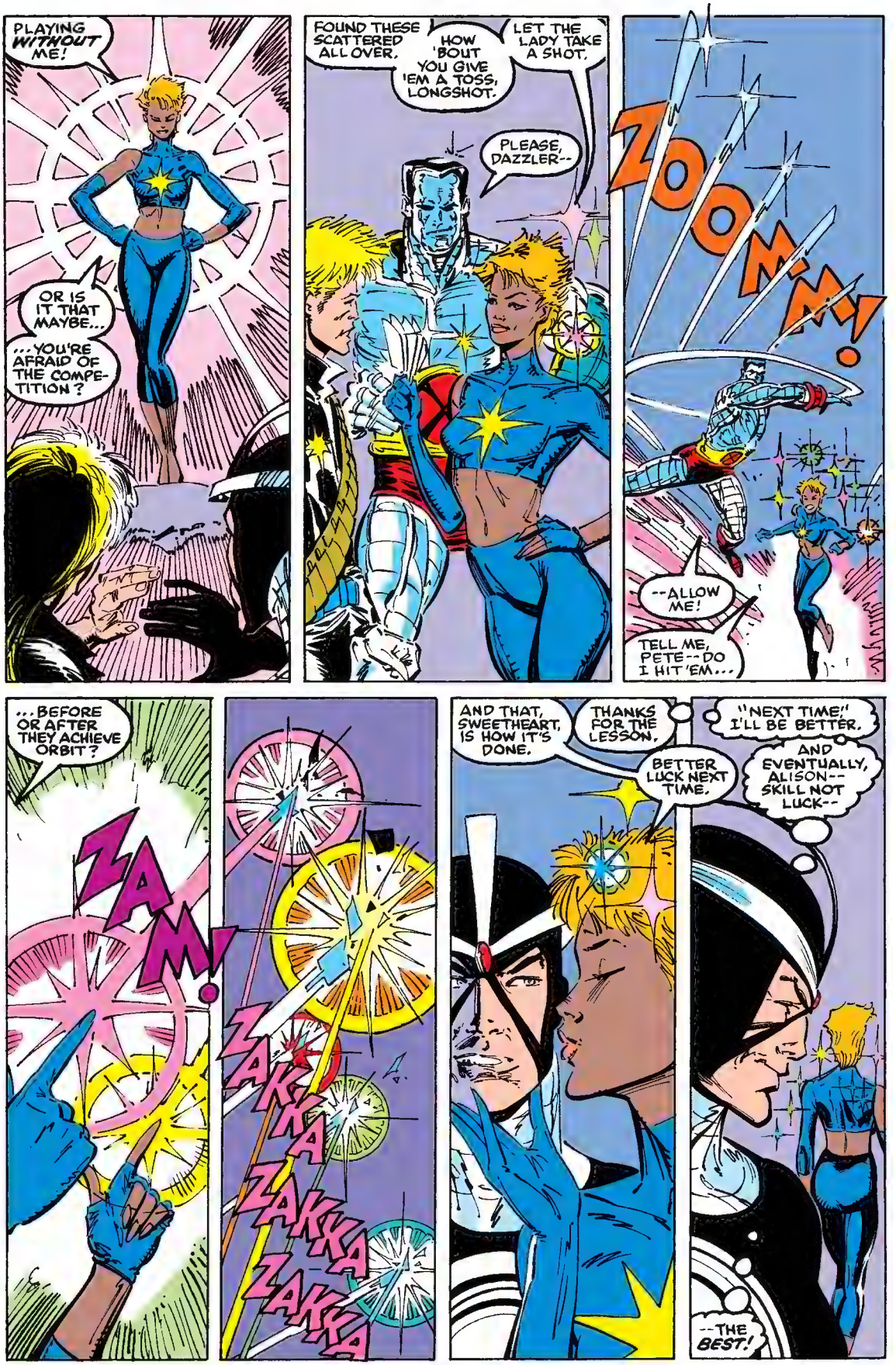
AUSTRALIA.
THE REMOTE ABANDONED OUTBACK TOWN THE X-MEN HAVE ADOPTED AS THEIR HOME.
AFTER MONTHS IN RESIDENCE...
...THEY'RE FINALLY STARTING TO FEEL LIKE THIS REALLY IS HOME.
AND WHAT, PRAY TELL, IS THAT?
STYLING GEL
SOMETHING I PICKED UP WHEN HAVOK AND I WERE IN MEXICO.
ALONG WITH THE BUBONIC PLAGUE?
ALL THINGS CONSIDERED, STORM...
...WHO ARE YOU TO MAKE FUN?
I MERELY HOPED, LOGAN, YOU MIGHT LEARN FROM MY MISTAKES.
SOMETIMES, DARLIN', PEOPLE PREFER TO MAKE THEIR OWN.
YOU'RE RIGHT, THOUGH--
--THIS DID LOOK BETTER ON THE ROAD.
YOU HAVE REQUESTED A LEAVE OF ABSENCE, WOLVERINE?

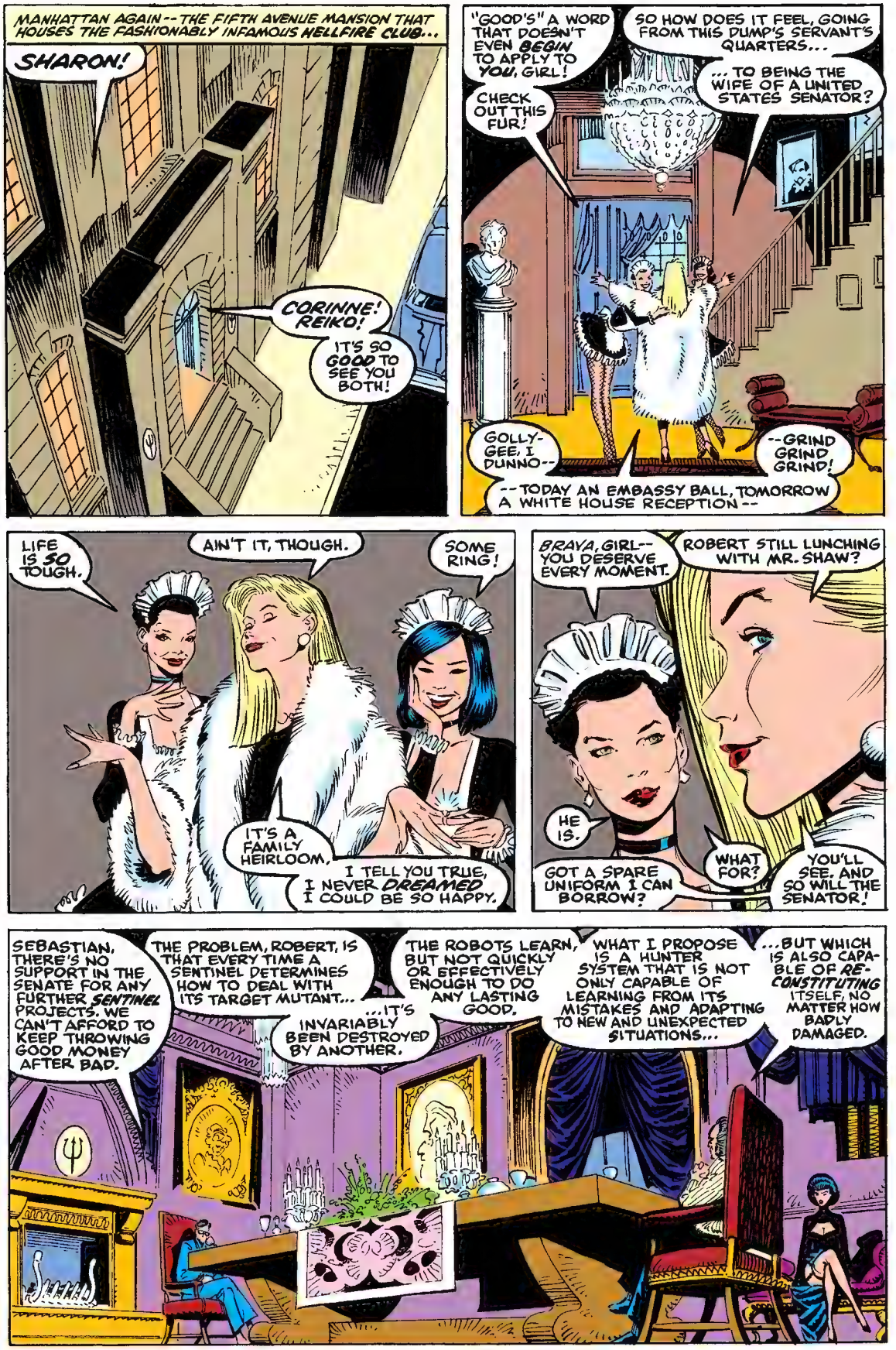

SOMETHING'S COME UP, BOSS, I GOTTA GO.
IF WE CAN HELP, MY FRIEND...
APPRECIATE THE OFFER, ORORO...
...BUT THIS IS PRIVATE BUSINESS.
NOW WHO'S FULL O' SURPRISES!
KILLER LOOK, DARLIN'-- JACKET AN' SHADES SUIT YOU BETTER'N ME, YOU'RE WELCOME TO 'EM--
--BUT HARDLY WHAT FOLKS EXPECT OF A "GODDESS".
STORMS, WOLVERINE, HAVE A MYRIAD OF COLORATIONS.
NO LESS THAN PEOPLE.
SO LONG AS I REMAIN TRUE TO MYSELF...
...I SEE NO REASON TO APOLOGIZE FOR HOW I APPEAR TO OTHERS.
THAT'S AN X-MAN TRAIT, SURE ENOUGH, GOIN' YOUR OWN WAY REGARDLESS, DEVIL TAKE THE CONSEQUENCES.
WE'RE TOO FLAMIN' PRIDEFULLY STUBBORN SOMETIMES FOR OUR OWN GOOD!
YOU NEED NEVER GO ALONE, LOGAN. OR STAND ALONE.
I KNOW.
BUT BY THE SAME TOKEN, MY LIFE'S BOUND BY OBLIGATIONS FREELY GIVEN.
"GIRI," THE JAPANESE CALL IT. "DUTY," BEIN' AN X-MAN TAUGHT ME THAT.
BEFORE, I WOULDN'T HAVE CARED, ONE WAY OR T'OTHER. I LIVED FOR MYSELF.
THAT'S CHANGED.
WOLVERINE MAY BE A CERTIFIABLE CRAZY, BUT HE'S ALSO A MAN WHO STANDS BY HIS WORD.
I UNDERSTAND--HOW LONG WILL YOU BE GONE.
EXPECT ME WHEN I'M BACK.
AND THAT WILL BE...?
WHEN THE JOB'S DONE.
SNIKT!

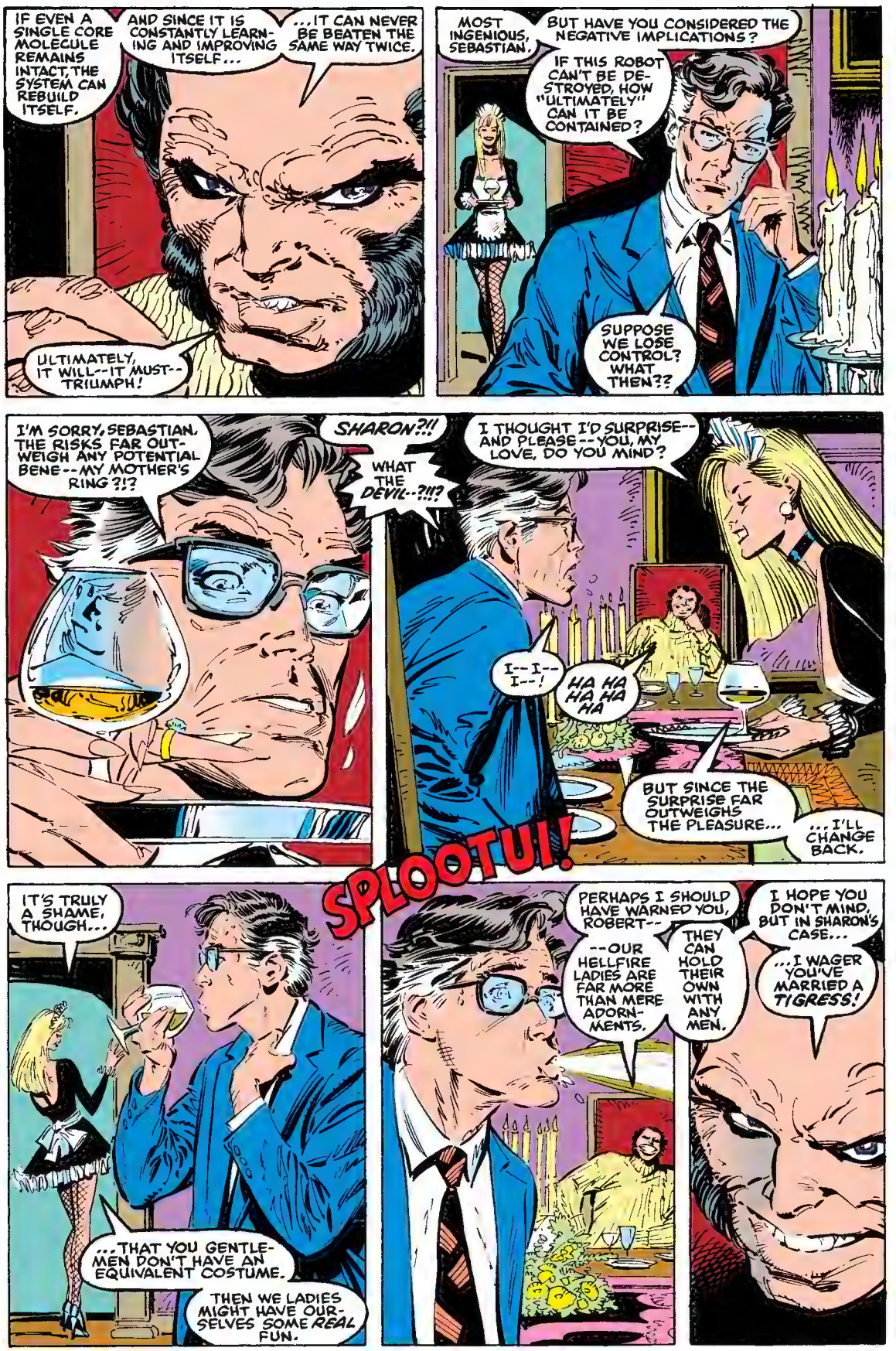

WASHINGTON, D.C. ...
US · STEVEN J DANVERS · MI
THOMAS E POOLE · WILLIA
THE "WALL."
HI, STEVE. IT'S ME, CAROL.
BEEN AN AGE.
SORRY I DIDN'T COME SOONER.
PRESIDENT GAVE ME THIS, LITTLE BROTHER--
--FOR SERVICE ABOVE AND BEYOND THE CALL OF DUTY.
BUT I'D GLADLY GIVE THE MEDAL--AND THE LIFE I NEARLY LOST WINNING IT--TO HAVE YOU STANDING HERE IN MY PLACE.
YOU SHOULDN'T HAVE GONE, STEVE--
--ONE OF US ANSWERING THE CALL TO GLORY WAS ENOUGH --
--YOU SHOULDN'T HAVE DIED.
NONE OF YOU SHOULD HAVE.


AUSTRALIA, AGAIN, THE DESERT JUST OUTSIDE TOWN...
C'MON, COLOSSUS-- CATCH ME IF YOU CAN!
COMRADE ALEX, MY BODY IS SOLID ORGANIC STEEL!
I MUST BE CARE-FUL!
A WRONG OR CARELESS MOVE --THE SLIGHT-EST MIS-STEP--
--COULD DO YOU SERIOUS HARM!
THAT'S MY WORRY, BIG GUY!
ANYTIME, LONGSHOT!
LET 'EM RIP!
HERE GOES, HAVOK!
HOW DO YOU EXPECT TO HIT LONGSHOT'S SPIKES, TOVARISCH--
--ESPECIAL-LY WHEN HE THROWS THEM IN A RANDOM PATTERN--
--WHILE DODGING ME?
ZARK!
THAT, PAL--
--IS PRECISELY THE IDEA!
ZAKKA ZAKKA
ZAM

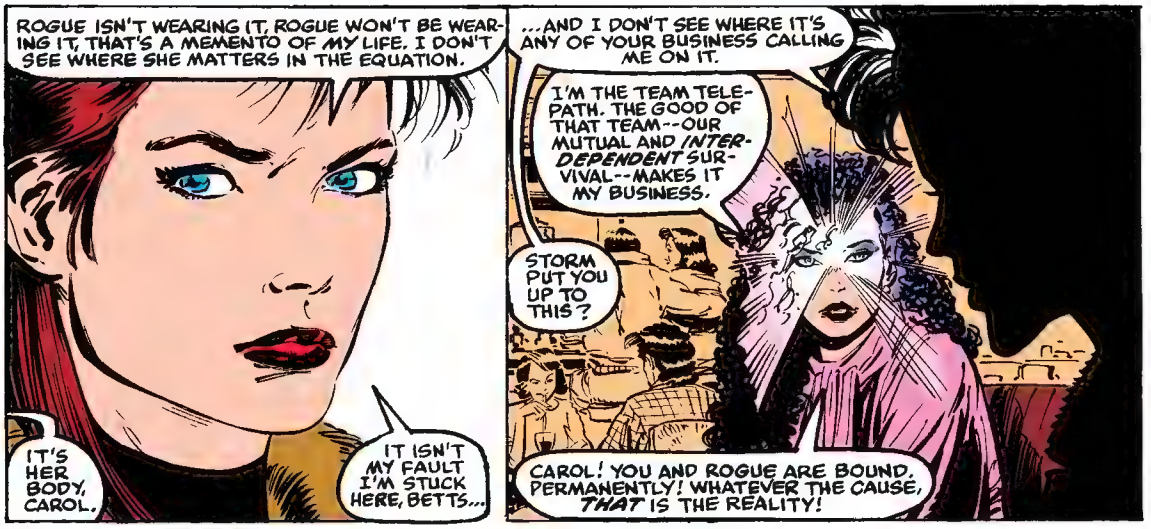

YOU MISSED SOME.
PRACTICE MAKES PERFECT.
SINCE WE DON'T HAVE A DANGER ROOM TO TRAIN IN ANYMORE...
...WE HAVE TO FIND OTHER WAYS OF KEEPING OUR POWERS AND SKILLS HONED.
SHWAM
HAVOK, YOU STRUCK ME--
--YOUR PLASMA BOLT IS RICOCHETING--
SKYARK
--STRAIGHT FOR LONG-SHOT!
WOW!
SKAKOW
I GUESS IT WAS MY WILD LUCK THAT MADE ME MOVE...
...RIGHT WHEN ALEX FIRED.
GOOD THING I FOLLOWED THAT INSTINCT!
BRILLIANT, BOY.
YOU NEARLY ASHED A TEAM-MATE.
BUT THAT'S WHY I'M OUT HERE.
MY PLASMA BEAMS ARE SO POWERFUL-- AND DANGEROUS--
--I'VE GOT TO HAVE THEM UNDER ABSOLUTE CONTROL.
I'VE TAKEN THEM-- AND THE REALITY OF BEING HAVOK--
--TOO LIGHTLY FOR TOO LONG...
...AND INNOCENT PEOPLE HAVE SUFFERED FOR IT--
--WHAT THE ?!!
SHAME ON YOU GUYS!


PLAYING WITHOUT ME!
OR IS IT THAT MAYBE...
...YOU'RE AFRAID OF THE COMPE-TITION?
FOUND THESE SCATTERED ALL OVER.
HOW 'BOUT YOU GIVE 'EM A TOSS, LONGSHOT.
LET THE LADY TAKE A SHOT.
PLEASE, DAZZLER--
ZOOM-M-!
--ALLOW ME!
TELL ME, PETE--DO I HIT 'EM...
...BEFORE OR AFTER THEY ACHIEVE ORBIT?
ZA-M!
ZAKKA ZAKKA ZAKKA ZAKKA
AND THAT, SWEETHEART, IS HOW IT'S DONE.
THANKS FOR THE LESSON.
BETTER LUCK NEXT TIME.
"NEXT TIME," I'LL BE BETTER.
AND EVENTUALLY, ALISON--SKILL NOT LUCK--
--THE BEST!

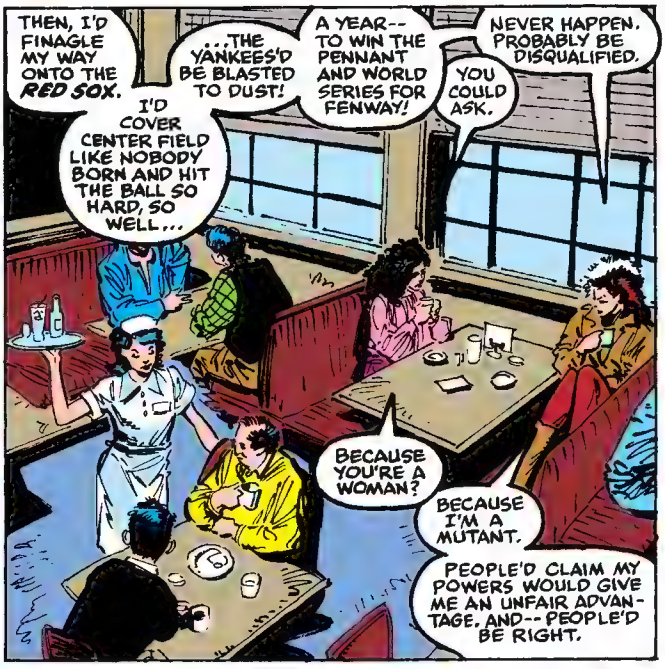

MANHATTAN AGAIN -- THE FIFTH AVENUE MANSION THAT HOUSES THE FASHIONABLY INFAMOUS HELLFIRE CLUB...
SHARON!
CORINNE! REIKO!
IT'S SO GOOD TO SEE YOU BOTH!
"GOOD'S" A WORD THAT DOESN'T EVEN BEGIN TO APPLY TO YOU, GIRL!
CHECK OUT THIS FUR!
SO HOW DOES IT FEEL, GOING FROM THIS DUMP'S SERVANT'S QUARTERS...
... TO BEING THE WIFE OF A UNITED STATES SENATOR?
GOLLY-GEE, I DUNNO--
--GRIND GRIND GRIND!
--TODAY AN EMBASSY BALL, TOMORROW A WHITE HOUSE RECEPTION --
LIFE IS SO TOUGH.
AIN'T IT, THOUGH.
SOME RING!
IT'S A FAMILY HEIRLOOM.
I TELL YOU TRUE, I NEVER DREAMED I COULD BE SO HAPPY.
BRAVA, GIRL-- YOU DESERVE EVERY MOMENT.
ROBERT STILL LUNCHING WITH MR. SHAW?
HE IS.
GOT A SPARE UNIFORM I CAN BORROW?
WHAT FOR?
YOU'LL SEE. AND SO WILL THE SENATOR!
SEBASTIAN, THERE'S NO SUPPORT IN THE SENATE FOR ANY FURTHER SENTINEL PROJECTS. WE CAN'T AFFORD TO KEEP THROWING GOOD MONEY AFTER BAD.
THE PROBLEM, ROBERT, IS THAT EVERY TIME A SENTINEL DETERMINES HOW TO DEAL WITH ITS TARGET MUTANT...
...IT'S INVARIABLY BEEN DESTROYED BY ANOTHER.
THE ROBOTS LEARN, BUT NOT QUICKLY OR EFFECTIVELY ENOUGH TO DO ANY LASTING GOOD.
WHAT I PROPOSE IS A HUNTER SYSTEM THAT IS NOT ONLY CAPABLE OF LEARNING FROM ITS MISTAKES AND ADAPTING TO NEW AND UNEXPECTED SITUATIONS...
...BUT WHICH IS ALSO CAPABLE OF RE-CONSTITUTING ITSELF, NO MATTER HOW BADLY DAMAGED.


IF EVEN A SINGLE CORE MOLECULE REMAINS INTACT, THE SYSTEM CAN REBUILD ITSELF.
AND SINCE IT IS CONSTANTLY LEARNING AND IMPROVING ITSELF...
...IT CAN NEVER BE BEATEN THE SAME WAY TWICE.
ULTIMATELY, IT WILL--IT MUST--TRIUMPH!
MOST INGENIOUS, SEBASTIAN.
BUT HAVE YOU CONSIDERED THE NEGATIVE IMPLICATIONS?
IF THIS ROBOT CAN'T BE DESTROYED, HOW "ULTIMATELY" CAN IT BE CONTAINED?
SUPPOSE WE LOSE CONTROL? WHAT THEN??
I'M SORRY, SEBASTIAN, THE RISKS FAR OUTWEIGH ANY POTENTIAL BENE--MY MOTHER'S RING?!?
SHARON?!!
WHAT THE DEVIL--?!!?
I THOUGHT I'D SURPRISE--AND PLEASE--YOU, MY LOVE, DO YOU MIND?
I--I--I--!
HA HA HA HA HA
BUT SINCE THE SURPRISE FAR OUTWEIGHS THE PLEASURE...
...I'LL CHANGE BACK.
SPLOOTUI!
IT'S TRULY A SHAME, THOUGH...
...THAT YOU GENTLEMEN DON'T HAVE AN EQUIVALENT COSTUME.
THEN WE LADIES MIGHT HAVE OURSELVES SOME REAL FUN.
PERHAPS I SHOULD HAVE WARNED YOU, ROBERT--
--OUR HELLFIRE LADIES ARE FAR MORE THAN MERE ADORNMENTS.
THEY CAN HOLD THEIR OWN WITH ANY MEN.
I HOPE YOU DON'T MIND, BUT IN SHARON'S CASE...
...I WAGER YOU'VE MARRIED A TIGRESS!

DOWNTOWN, IN THE WESTYILLAGE...
CAROL DANVERS REALLY APPRECIATES...
...YOUR LOOKING AFTER HER STUFF, MS. JONES.
NO PROB, WHAT ARE LANDLORDS FOR?
HADN'T HEARD FROM HER IN AGES...
...BEFORE THE NOTE SAYING YOU WERE COMING.
GIVE HER MY BEST, OKAY?
MY PLEASURE.
ARABELLA JONES WAS A FRIEND, ROGUE.
HOW DO I -- CAN I -- TELL HER WHO I REALLY AM?
OR TELL MY FOLKS?
YOU COMPLAIN ABOUT THE BITS OF YOUR LIFE I "STEAL" WHEN I'M IN CONTROL.
WHAT ABOUT MY WHOLE LIFE AS CAROL DANVERS...
...THAT I CAN'T EVER AGAIN BE A PART OF?
FANCY MEETING YOU HERE.
WHY AM I NOT SURPRISED?
PICKING MY BRAIN, PSYLOCKE?
I DON'T DO THAT, CAROL--
--UNLESS I HAVE TO.
IN YOURS -- AND ROGUE'S -- CASE, HOWEVER, I CAN'T.
THE UNIQUE INTERACTIVE SYNTHESIS OF YOUR DUAL CONSCIOUSNESS MAKES YOU BOTH EXCEPTIONALLY RESISTANT TO TELEPATHY.
"INTERACTIVE" -- THAT'S A LAUGH.
AT BEST, WE EXIST IN AN UNEASY ARMISTICE.
AND LATELY, RELATIONS BETWEEN US...
...ARE NOT AT THEIR BEST.
CAROL, YOU ACTUALLY WORE THIS?
IN ITS DAY, IT WAS CONSIDERED THE HEIGHT OF SUPER-HERO HAUTE COUTURE.
SO WERE MIDI-SKIRTS.
YOU SHOULD SEE THE COSTUME IT REPLACED.
ROGUE WOULD GAG.

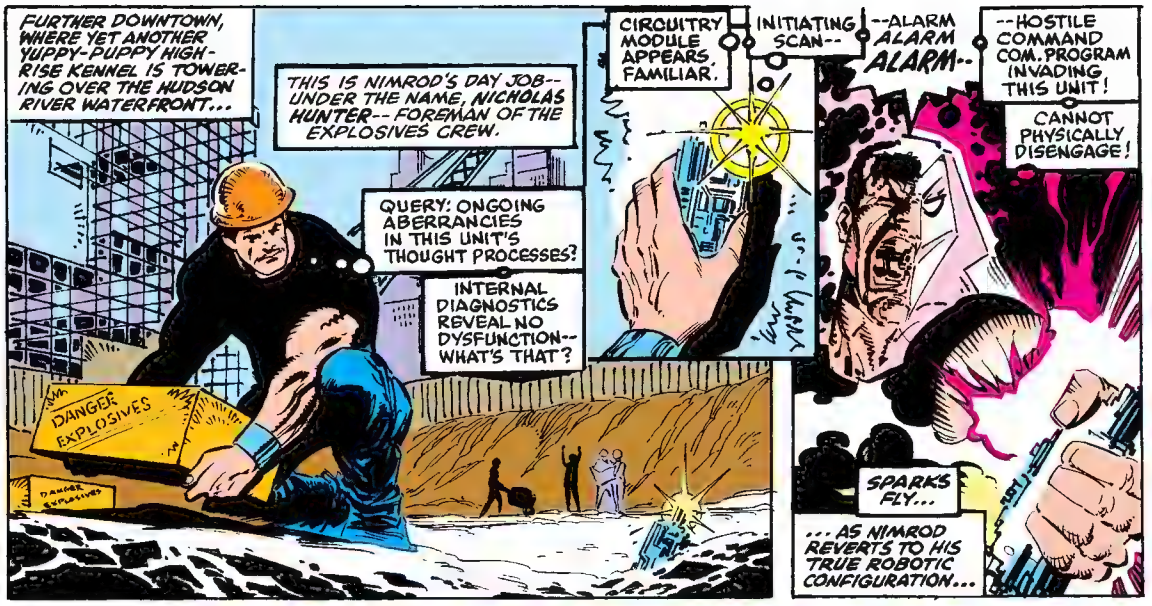

ROGUE ISN'T WEARING IT, ROGUE WON'T BE WEARING IT, THAT'S A MEMENTO OF MY LIFE. I DON'T SEE WHERE SHE MATTERS IN THE EQUATION.
IT'S HER BODY, CAROL.
IT ISN'T MY FAULT I'M STUCK HERE, BETTS...
...AND I DON'T SEE WHERE IT'S ANY OF YOUR BUSINESS CALLING ME ON IT.
I'M THE TEAM TELEPATH. THE GOOD OF THAT TEAM--OUR MUTUAL AND INTERDEPENDENT SURVIVAL--MAKES IT MY BUSINESS.
STORM PUT YOU UP TO THIS?
CAROL! YOU AND ROGUE ARE BOUND, PERMANENTLY! WHATEVER THE CAUSE, THAT IS THE REALITY!

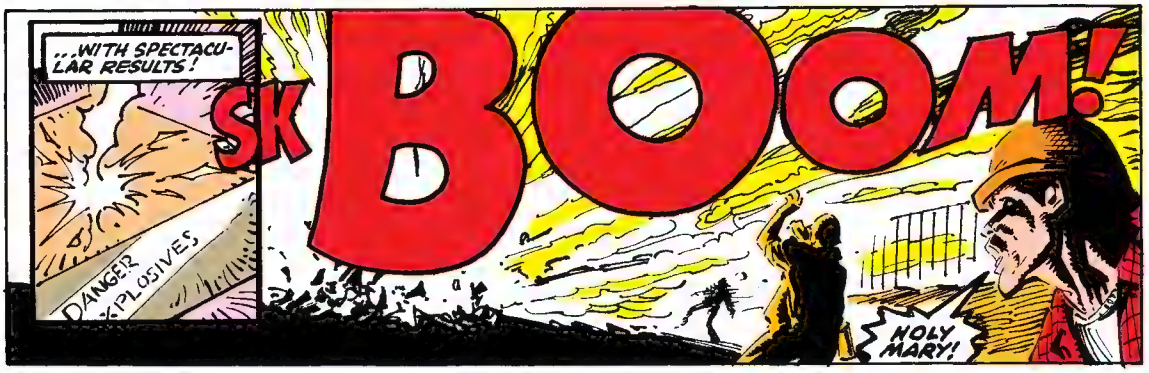
ROGUE'S A CHILD--FROM HER, WE EXPECTED THIS. BUT WHY THE DEVIL ARE YOU BEING SO DIFFICULT?!
KNOW WHAT I WISH?
THAT I COULD CUT A DEAL WITH HER...
...TO HAVE COMPLETE CONTROL FOR A YEAR, JUST A YEAR.


THEN, I'D FINAGLE MY WAY ONTO THE RED SOX.
...THE YANKEES'D BE BLASTED TO DUST!
A YEAR--TO WIN THE PENNANT AND WORLD SERIES FOR FENWAY!
NEVER HAPPEN. PROBABLY BE DISQUALIFIED.
YOU COULD ASK.
I'D COVER CENTER FIELD LIKE NOBODY BORN AND HIT THE BALL SO HARD, SO WELL...
BECAUSE YOU'RE A WOMAN?
BECAUSE I'M A MUTANT.
PEOPLE'D CLAIM MY POWERS WOULD GIVE ME AN UNFAIR ADVANTAGE. AND--PEOPLE'D BE RIGHT.

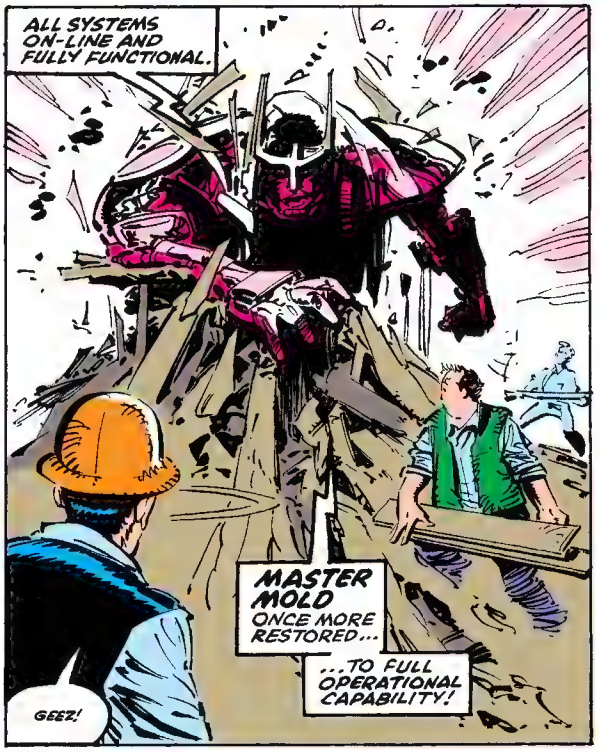
TIMES LIKE THIS, IT FEELS LIKE WE ENDURE ALL THE GRIEF THERE IS...
...BUT WE'RE NOT ALLOWED TO ENJOY ANY OF THE FUN.
PERHAPS THAT IS THE PRICE WE PAY FOR BEING WHO AND WHAT WE ARE?

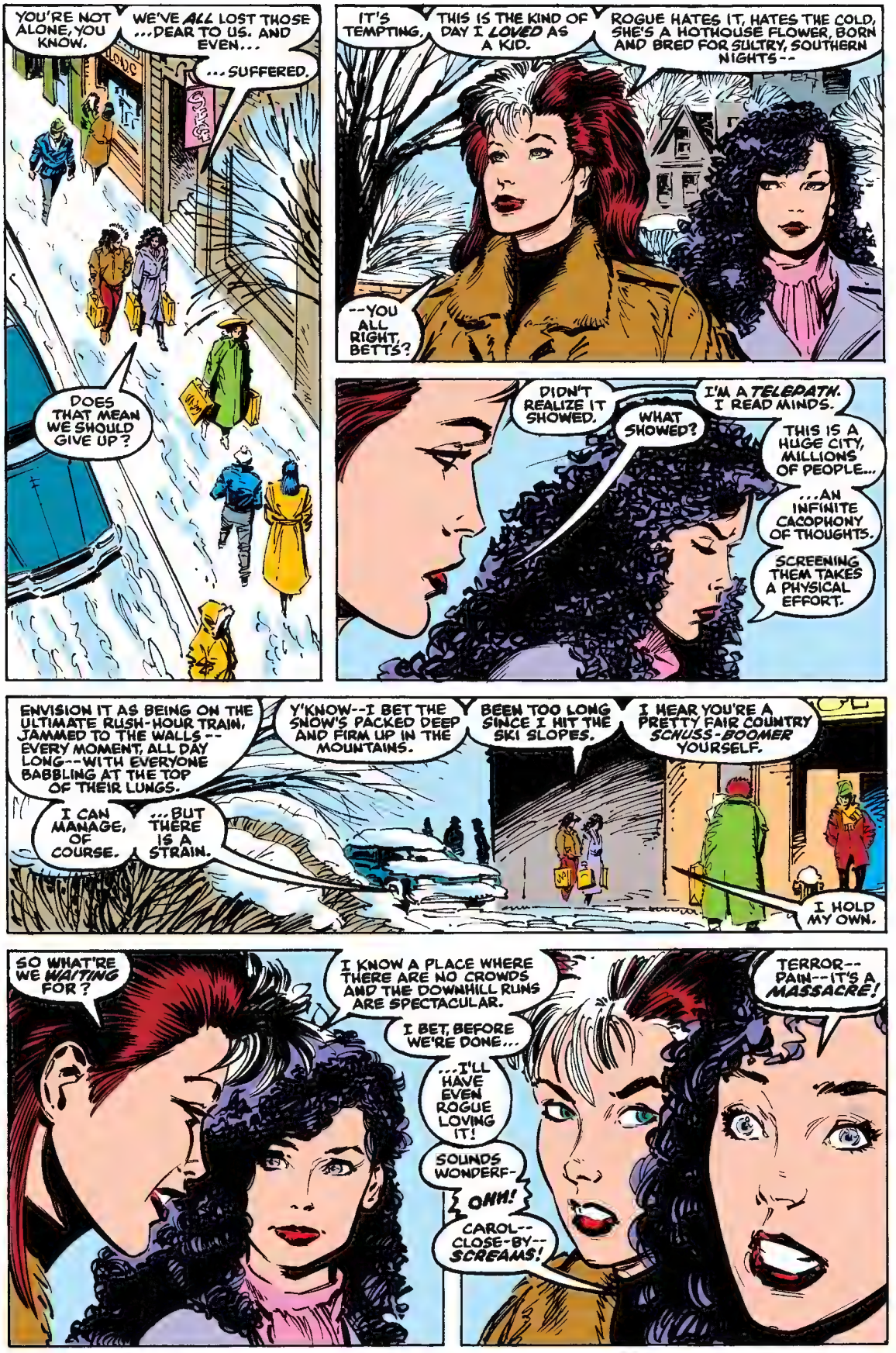
PERHAPS THAT ISN'T ENOUGH.

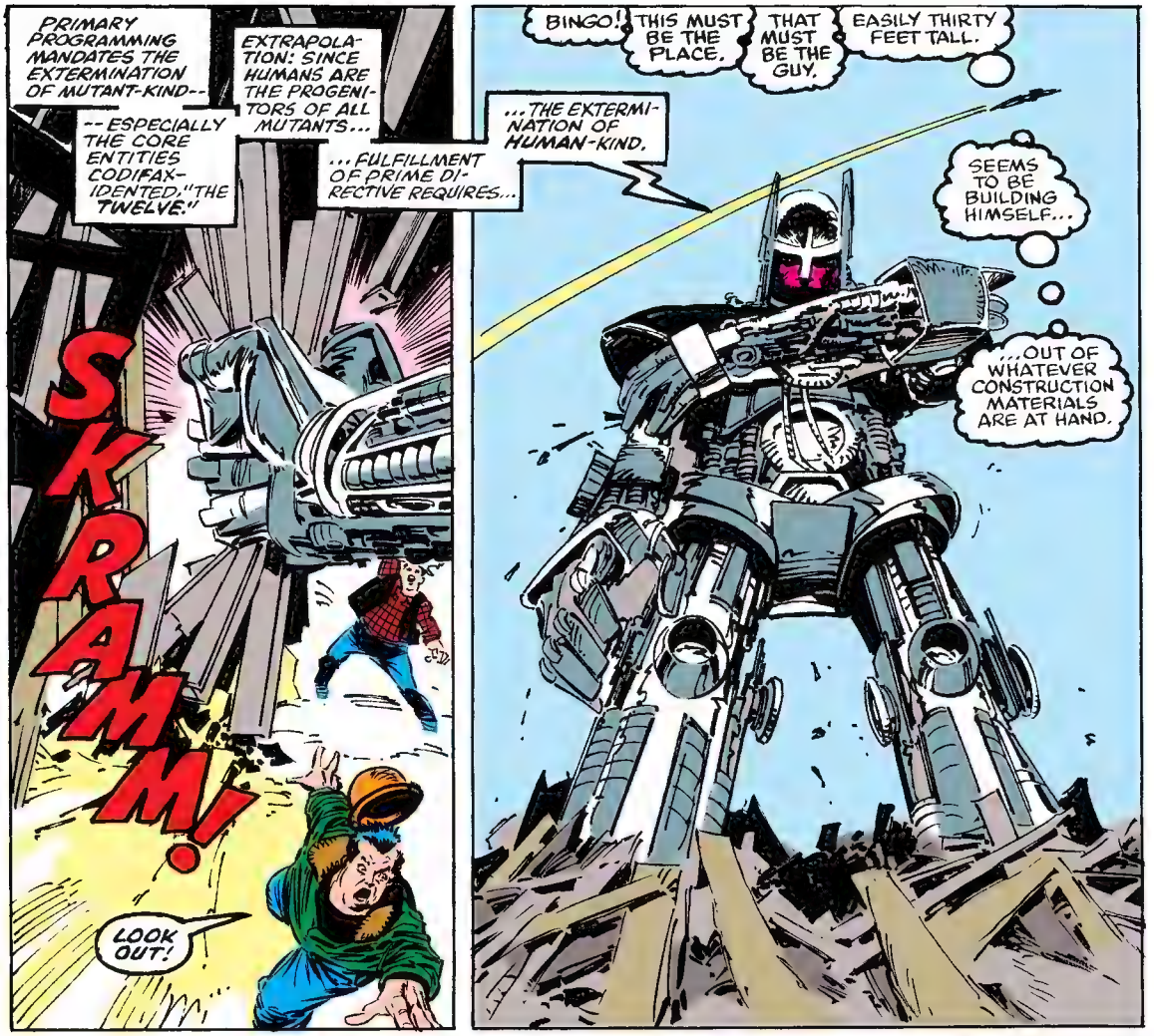

FURTHER DOWNTOWN, WHERE YET ANOTHER YUPPY-PUPPY HIGH-RISE KENNEL IS TOWERING OVER THE HUDSON RIVER WATERFRONT...
THIS IS NIMROD'S DAY JOB-- UNDER THE NAME, NICHOLAS HUNTER-- FOREMAN OF THE EXPLOSIVES CREW.
QUERY: ONGOING ABERRANCIES IN THIS UNIT'S THOUGHT PROCESSES?
INTERNAL DIAGNOSTICS REVEAL NO DYSFUNCTION-- WHAT'S THAT?
DANGER EXPLOSIVES
CIRCUITRY MODULE APPEARS, FAMILIAR.
INITIATING SCAN--
--ALARM ALARM ALARM--
--HOSTILE COMMAND COM. PROGRAM INVADING THIS UNIT!
CANNOT PHYSICALLY DISENGAGE!
SPARKS FLY...
...AS NIMROD REVERTS TO HIS TRUE ROBOTIC CONFIGURATION...

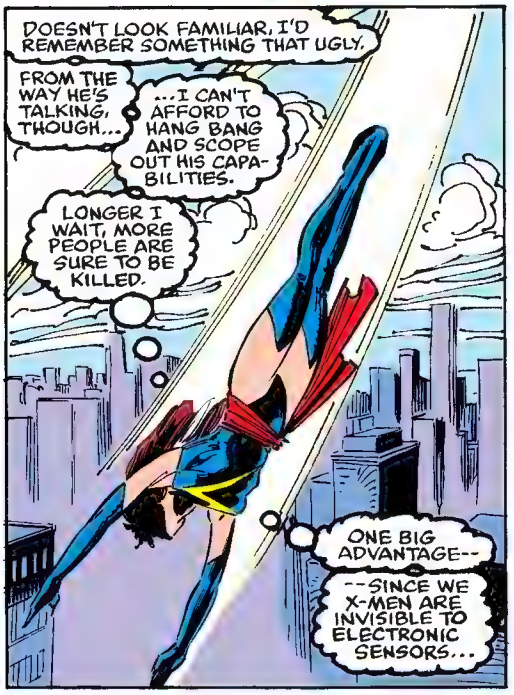

...WITH SPECTACULAR RESULTS!
DANGER EXPLOSIVES
SK
BOOM!
HOLY MARY!

NICK WAS OVER THERE!
GET A CREW! AN' PUT INNA CALL TO E.M.S. FOR AN AMBULANCE!
SHADDAP AN' DIG, RUGGIERO!
WE GOTTA MAKE SURE!
WHY BOTHER? NOBODY COULD'A SURVIVED THAT.

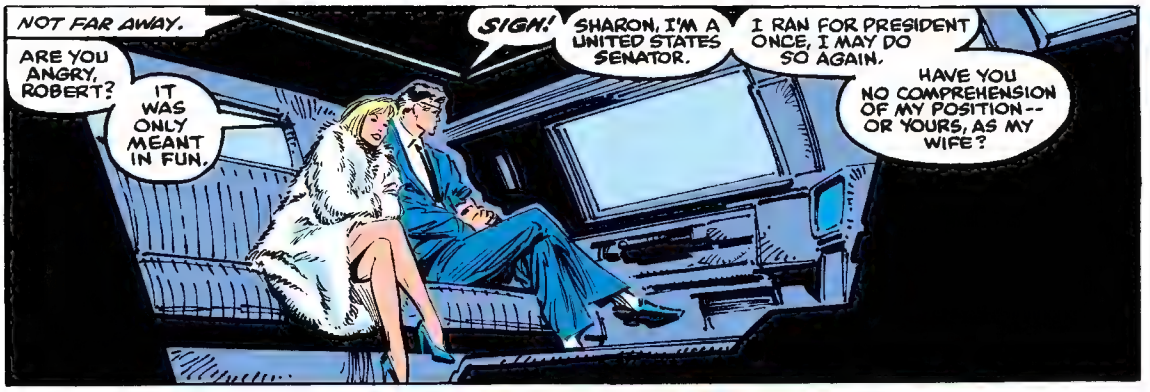

ALL SYSTEMS ON-LINE AND FULLY FUNCTIONAL.
MASTER MOLD ONCE MORE RESTORED...
...TO FULL OPERATIONAL CAPABILITY!
GEEZ!

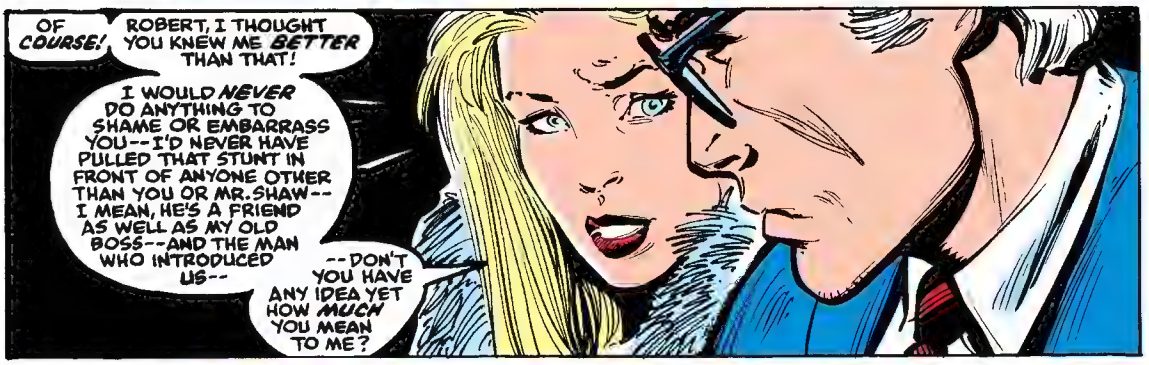

YOU'RE NOT ALONE, YOU KNOW.
WE'VE ALL LOST THOSE ...DEAR TO US. AND EVEN...
...SUFFERED.
DOES THAT MEAN WE SHOULD GIVE UP?
IT'S TEMPTING.
THIS IS THE KIND OF DAY I LOVED AS A KID.
ROGUE HATES IT, HATES THE COLD, SHE'S A HOTHOUSE FLOWER, BORN AND BRED FOR SULTRY, SOUTHERN NIGHTS--
--YOU ALL RIGHT, BETTS?
DIDN'T REALIZE IT SHOWED.
WHAT SHOWED?
I'M A TELEPATH. I READ MINDS.
THIS IS A HUGE CITY, MILLIONS OF PEOPLE...
...AN INFINITE CACOPHONY OF THOUGHTS.
SCREENING THEM TAKES A PHYSICAL EFFORT.
ENVISION IT AS BEING ON THE ULTIMATE RUSH-HOUR TRAIN, JAMMED TO THE WALLS -- EVERY MOMENT, ALL DAY LONG--WITH EVERYONE BABBLING AT THE TOP OF THEIR LUNGS.
I CAN MANAGE, OF COURSE.
...BUT THERE IS A STRAIN.
Y'KNOW--I BET THE SNOW'S PACKED DEEP AND FIRM UP IN THE MOUNTAINS.
BEEN TOO LONG SINCE I HIT THE SKI SLOPES.
I HEAR YOU'RE A PRETTY FAIR COUNTRY SCHUSS-BOOMER YOURSELF.
I HOLD MY OWN.
SO WHAT'RE WE WAITING FOR?
I KNOW A PLACE WHERE THERE ARE NO CROWDS AND THE DOWNHILL RUNS ARE SPECTACULAR.
I BET, BEFORE WE'RE DONE...
...I'LL HAVE EVEN ROGUE LOVING IT!
SOUNDS WONDERF-
OHH!
CAROL--CLOSE-BY--SCREAMS!
TERROR--PAIN--IT'S A MASSACRE!

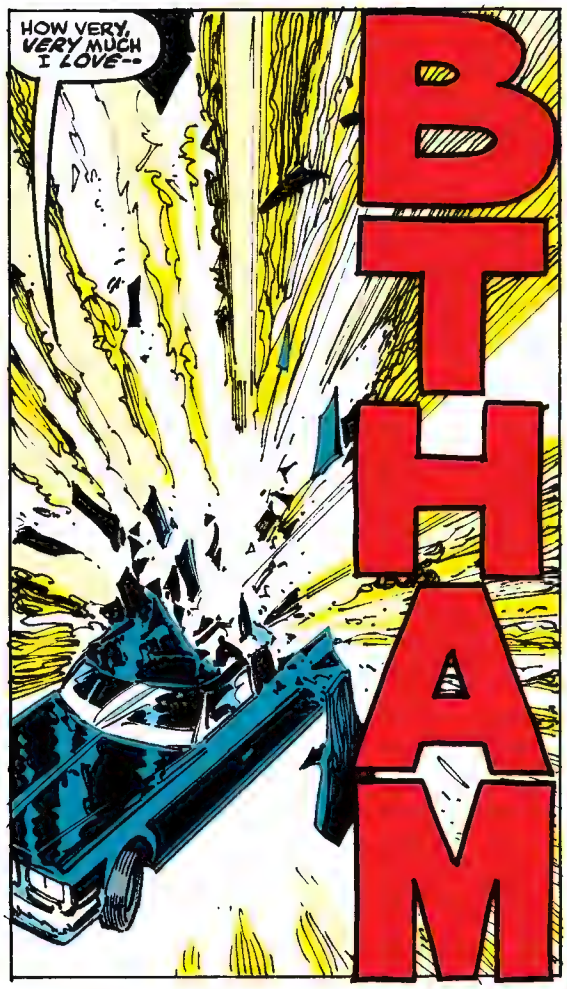

PRIMARY PROGRAMMING MANDATES THE EXTERMINATION OF MUTANT-KIND--
EXTRAPOLATION: SINCE HUMANS ARE THE PROGENITORS OF ALL MUTANTS...
--ESPECIALLY THE CORE ENTITIES CODIFAX-IDENTED, "THE TWELVE."
...FULFILLMENT OF PRIME DIRECTIVE REQUIRES...
SKRAM!
LOOK OUT!
BINGO!
THIS MUST BE THE PLACE.
THAT MUST BE THE GUY.
EASILY THIRTY FEET TALL.
...THE EXTERMINATION OF HUMAN-KIND.
SEEMS TO BE BUILDING HIMSELF...
...OUT OF WHATEVER CONSTRUCTION MATERIALS ARE AT HAND.


DOESN'T LOOK FAMILIAR, I'D REMEMBER SOMETHING THAT UGLY.
FROM THE WAY HE'S TALKING, THOUGH...
...I CAN'T AFFORD TO HANG BANG AND SCOPE OUT HIS CAPABILITIES.
LONGER I WAIT, MORE PEOPLE ARE SURE TO BE KILLED.
ONE BIG ADVANTAGE--
--SINCE WE X-MEN ARE INVISIBLE TO ELECTRONIC SENSORS...

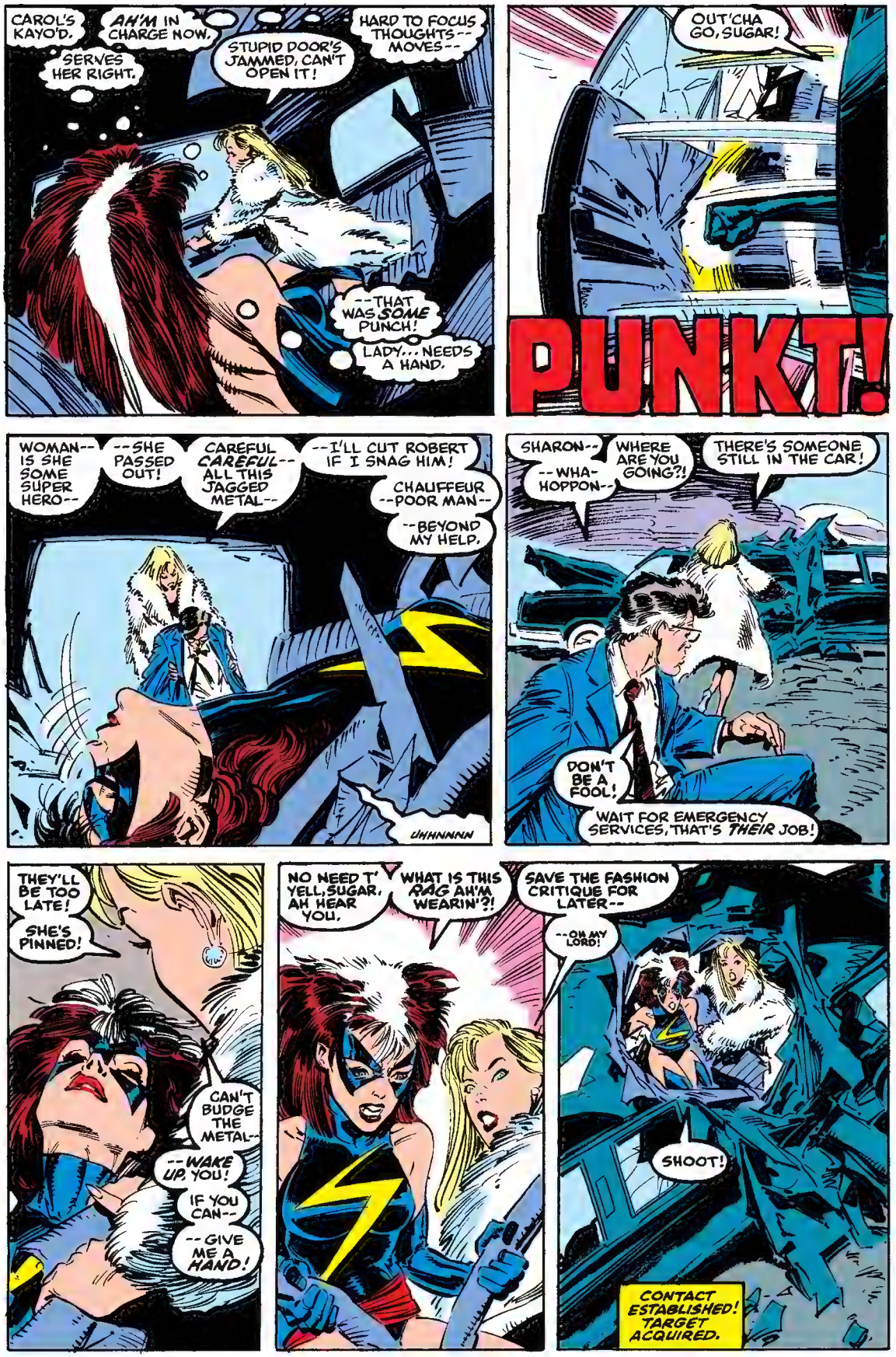
...THE ROBOT WON'T EVEN KNOW WHAT HIT HI--
OWW!
FWAP!

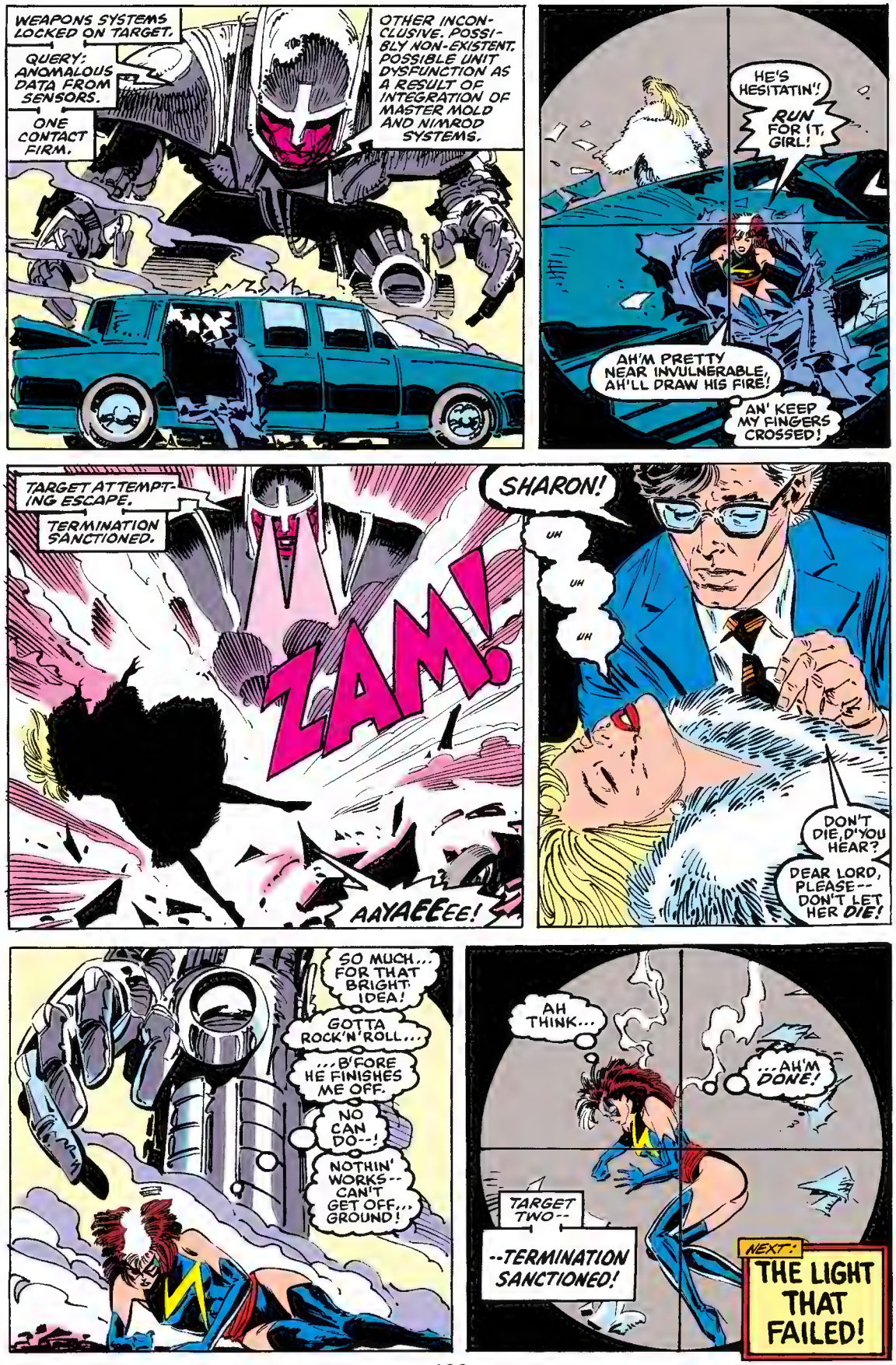

NOT FAR AWAY.
ARE YOU ANGRY, ROBERT?
IT WAS ONLY MEANT IN FUN.
SIGH!
SHARON, I'M A UNITED STATES SENATOR.
I RAN FOR PRESIDENT ONCE, I MAY DO SO AGAIN.
HAVE YOU NO COMPREHENSION OF MY POSITION--OR YOURS, AS MY WIFE?


OF COURSE!
ROBERT, I THOUGHT YOU KNEW ME BETTER THAN THAT!
I WOULD NEVER DO ANYTHING TO SHAME OR EMBARRASS YOU--I'D NEVER HAVE PULLED THAT STUNT IN FRONT OF ANYONE OTHER THAN YOU OR MR. SHAW--I MEAN, HE'S A FRIEND AS WELL AS MY OLD BOSS--AND THE MAN WHO INTRODUCED US--
--DON'T YOU HAVE ANY IDEA YET HOW MUCH YOU MEAN TO ME?


HOW VERY, VERY MUCH I LOVE--
BTHAM

OH
SOMETHING
OW
HIT US
OH
CAR ALL BUSTED
OW
I'M ALL BUSTED
OH
HURT INSIDE
OW
ROBERT!
OH
HE'S UNCONSCIOUS!
OW
WHO'S THAT COSTUMED WOMAN?
HE HIT ME!
SENSED MY ATTACK.
BUT--HOW?!!


CAROL'S KAYO'D.
AH'M IN CHARGE NOW.
SERVES HER RIGHT.
STUPID DOOR'S JAMMED, CAN'T OPEN IT!
HARD TO FOCUS THOUGHTS-- MOVES--
--THAT WAS SOME PUNCH!
LADY... NEEDS A HAND.
OUT'CHA GO, SUGAR!
PUNKT!
WOMAN-- IS SHE SOME SUPER HERO--
--SHE PASSED OUT!
CAREFUL CAREFUL-- ALL THIS JAGGED METAL--
--I'LL CUT ROBERT IF I SNAG HIM!
CHAUFFEUR --POOR MAN--
--BEYOND MY HELP.
UHHNNNN
SHARON--
--WHA- HOPPON--
WHERE ARE YOU GOING?!
THERE'S SOMEONE STILL IN THE CAR!
DON'T BE A FOOL!
WAIT FOR EMERGENCY SERVICES, THAT'S THEIR JOB!
THEY'LL BE TOO LATE!
SHE'S PINNED!
CAN'T BUDGE THE METAL--
--WAKE UP, YOU!
IF YOU CAN--
--GIVE ME A HAND!
NO NEED T' YELL, SUGAR. AH HEAR YOU.
WHAT IS THIS RAG AH'M WEARIN'?!
SAVE THE FASHION CRITIQUE FOR LATER--
--OH MY LORD!
SHOOT!
CONTACT ESTABLISHED! TARGET ACQUIRED.


WEAPONS SYSTEMS LOCKED ON TARGET.
QUERY: ANOMALOUS DATA FROM SENSORS.
ONE CONTACT FIRM.
OTHER INCONCLUSIVE. POSSIBLY NON-EXISTENT. POSSIBLE UNIT DYSFUNCTION AS A RESULT OF INTEGRATION OF MASTER MOLD AND NIMROD SYSTEMS.
HE'S HESITATIN'!
RUN FOR IT, GIRL!
AH'M PRETTY NEAR INVULNERABLE, AH'LL DRAW HIS FIRE!
AN' KEEP MY FINGERS CROSSED!
TARGET ATTEMPTING ESCAPE.
TERMINATION SANCTIONED.
ZAM!
AAYAEEEE!
SHARON!
UH
UH
UH
DON'T DIE, D'YOU HEAR?
DEAR LORD, PLEASE-- DON'T LET HER DIE!
SO MUCH... FOR THAT BRIGHT IDEA!
GOTTA ROCK'N'ROLL...
...B'FORE HE FINISHES ME OFF.
NO CAN DO--!
NOTHIN' WORKS-- CAN'T GET OFF... GROUND!
AH THINK...
...AH'M DONE!
TARGET TWO--
--TERMINATION SANCTIONED!
NEXT:
THE LIGHT THAT FAILED!

MARVEL
THE UNCANNY
X-MEN
WITNESS THE FEARFUL FATE OF AN X-MAN!
TM
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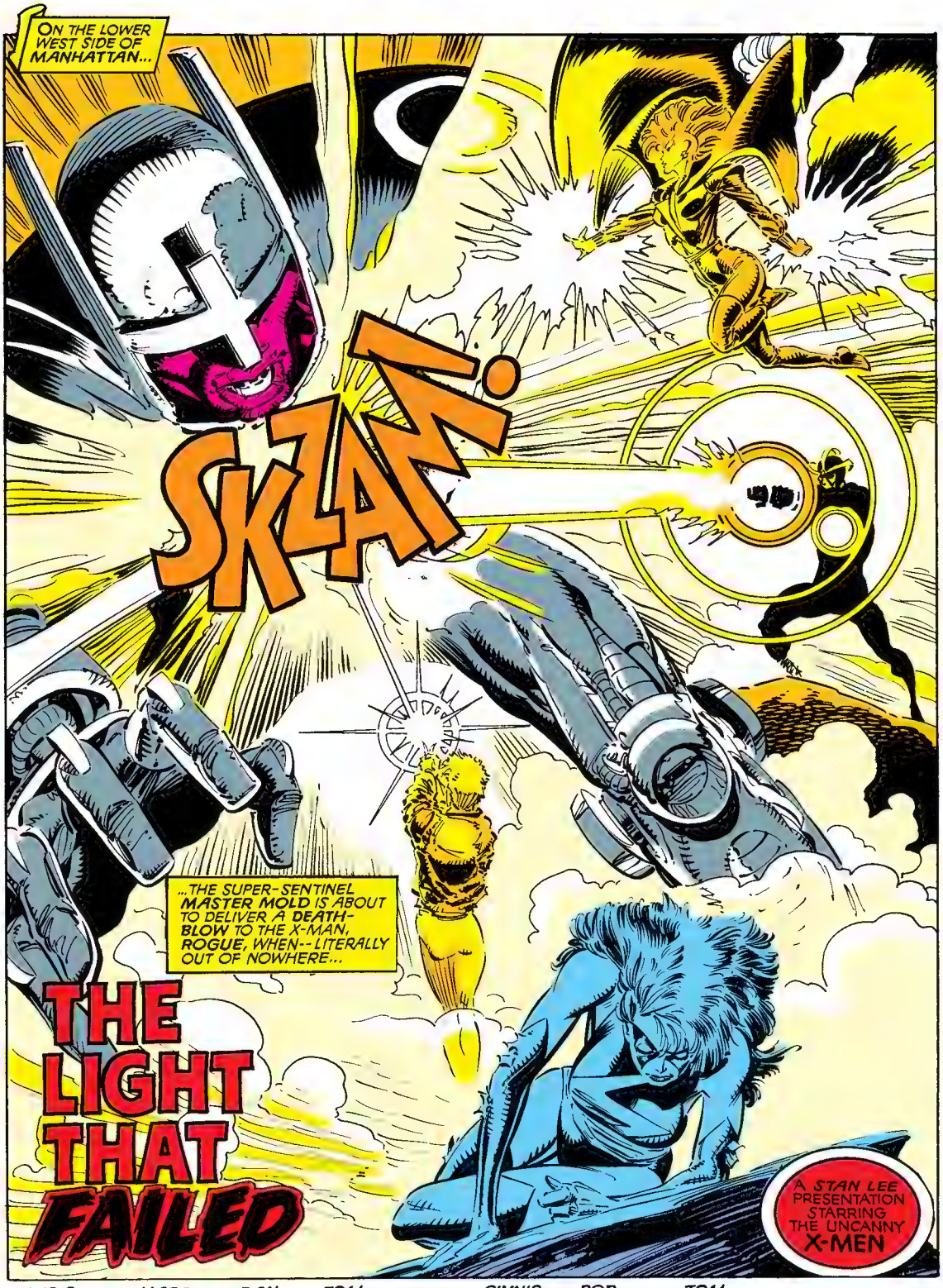
APPROVED BY THE COMICS CODE
AUTHORITY
WHAT PRICE VICTORY?
SILVESTRI & GREEN


ON THE LOWER WEST SIDE OF MANHATTAN...
SKZAM!
...THE SUPER-SENTINEL MASTER MOLD IS ABOUT TO DELIVER A DEATH-BLOW TO THE X-MAN, ROGUE, WHEN--LITERALLY OUT OF NOWHERE...
THE LIGHT THAT FAILED
A STAN LEE PRESENTATION STARRING THE UNCANNY X-MEN

CHRIS CLAREMONT WRITER | MARC SILVESTRI PENCILER | DAN GREEN INKER | TOM ORZECHOWSKI LETTERER | GLYNIS OLIVER COLORIST | BOB HARRAS EDITOR | TOM DeFALCO FOREMAN

ALARM ALARM ALARM--

-- THIS UNIT UNDER ATTACK--

-- BY THREE DISTINCT FORMS OF DIRECTED ENERGY BEAMS!

INITIATING DAMAGE CONTROL AND THREAT ANALYSIS!

THANK HEAVEN YOU HEARD MY PSICALL!

IMPOSSIBLE NOT TO, PSYLOCKE, THAT WAS SOME TELEPATHIC SHOUT!

AND YOU'VE GATEWAY TO THANK FOR TELEPORTING US HERE IN TIME.

OUR FOE IS A ROBOT?

CHECK OUT THOSE BEADY BIG EYES, BOSS--

--AND THE BASIC DESIGN CONFIGURATION--

--LOOKS AWFULLY LOT LIKE A SENTINEL.

WILL WE NEVER BE FREE OF THOSE METAL MONSTERS?!

WHAT'S A "SENTINEL?"

ROBOT HUNTER-KILLERS, LONGSHOT, PROGRAMMED TO EXTERMINATE MUTANT-KIND.

ALARM!

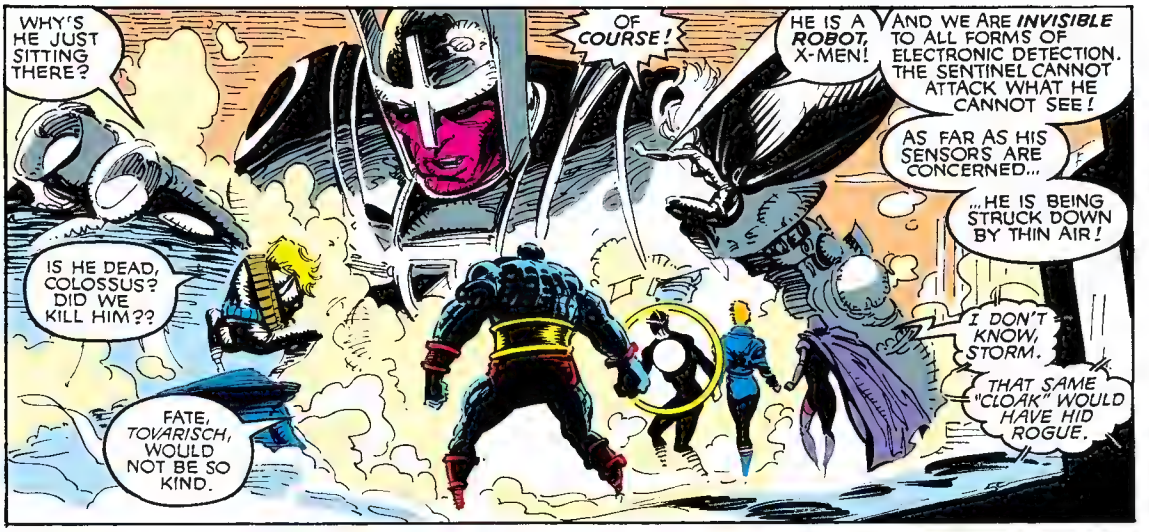
SCANNING SYSTEMS, MAJOR DYSFUNCTION.

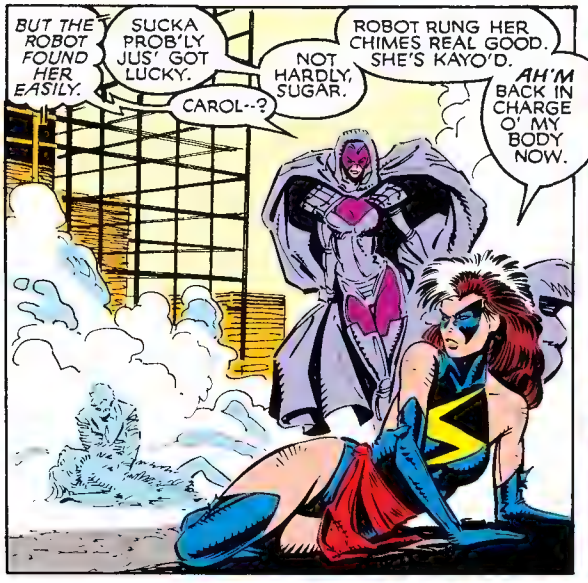
UNABLE TO COMPLETE COMBAT ANALYSIS AND RESPONSE.

CONTINUING ONGOING SYNTHESIS OF PRIME UNIT MASTER MOLD AND SUB-ORDINATE SENTINEL, IDENT-CODIFAXED NIMROD.

HOST UNIT NIMROD RESISTING SYSTEMS INTEGRATION.

THIS UNIT UNABLE TO ESTABLISH POSITIVE CONTACT WITH HOSTILE BIOFORMS.

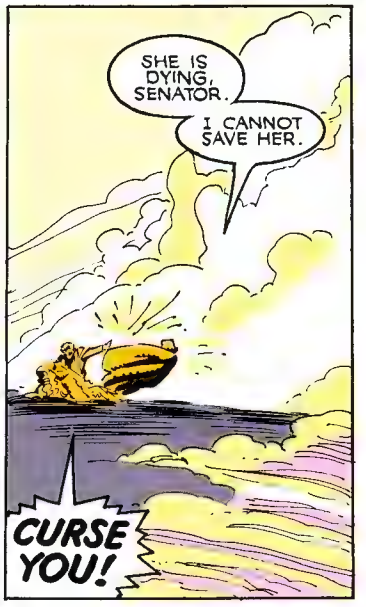

WHY'S HE JUST SITTING THERE?
OF COURSE!
HE IS A ROBOT, X-MEN!
AND WE ARE INVISIBLE TO ALL FORMS OF ELECTRONIC DETECTION. THE SENTINEL CANNOT ATTACK WHAT HE CANNOT SEE!
AS FAR AS HIS SENSORS ARE CONCERNED...
...HE IS BEING STRUCK DOWN BY THIN AIR!
IS HE DEAD, COLOSSUS? DID WE KILL HIM??
I DON'T KNOW, STORM.
THAT SAME "CLOAK" WOULD HAVE HID ROGUE.
FATE, TOVARISCH, WOULD NOT BE SO KIND.

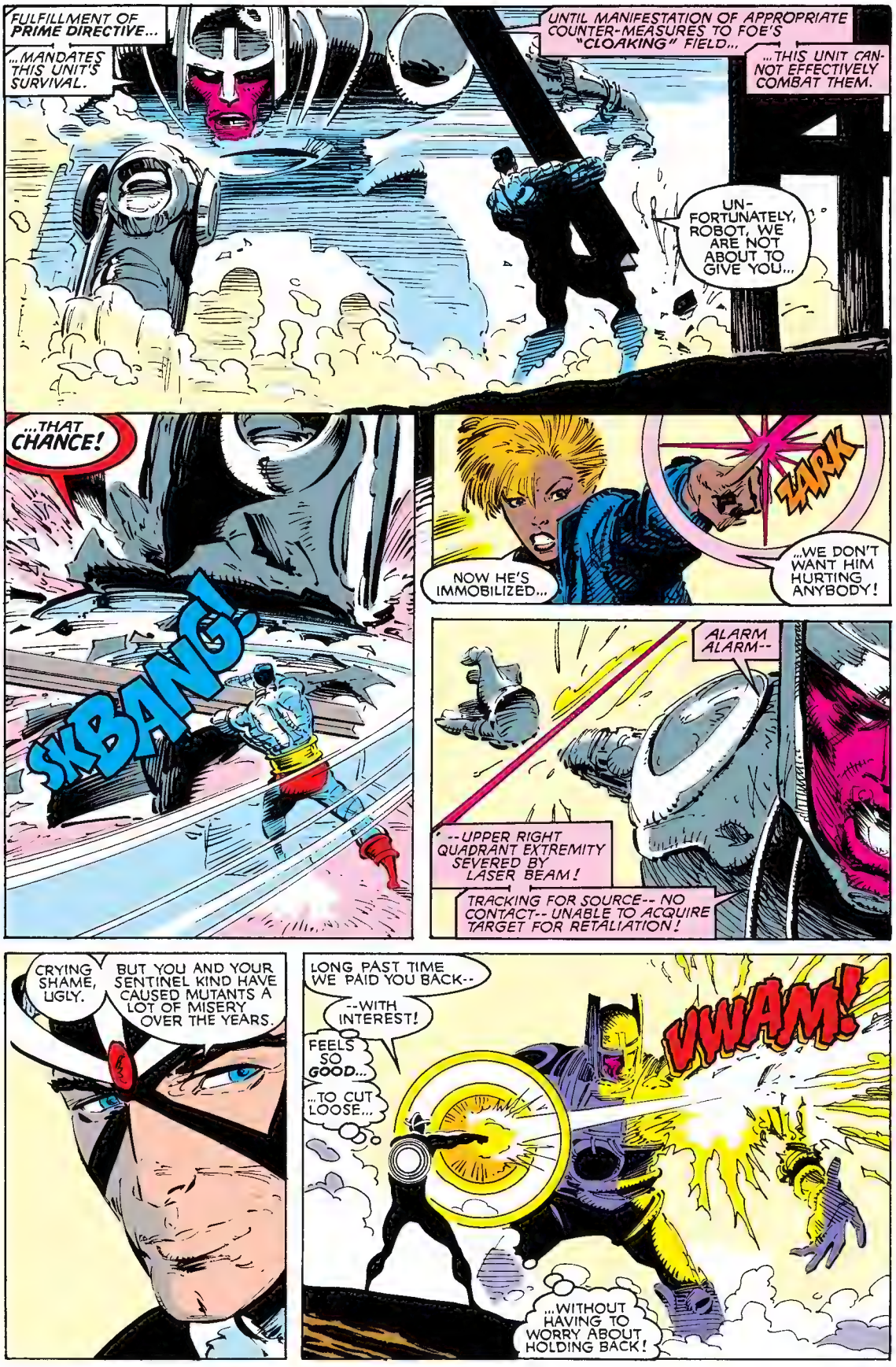

BUT THE ROBOT FOUND HER EASILY.
SUCKA PROB'LY JUS' GOT LUCKY.
CAROL--?
NOT HARDLY, SUGAR.
ROBOT RUNG HER CHIMES REAL GOOD. SHE'S KAYO'D.
AH'M BACK IN CHARGE O' MY BODY NOW.

SHOOT, PSYLOCKE, YOU SEE THIS RAG SHE GOT ME WEARIN'?! WOMAN HAS NO TASTE AT ALL!
PLEASE-- WHOEVER YOU ARE--
--MY WIFE NEEDS HELP!

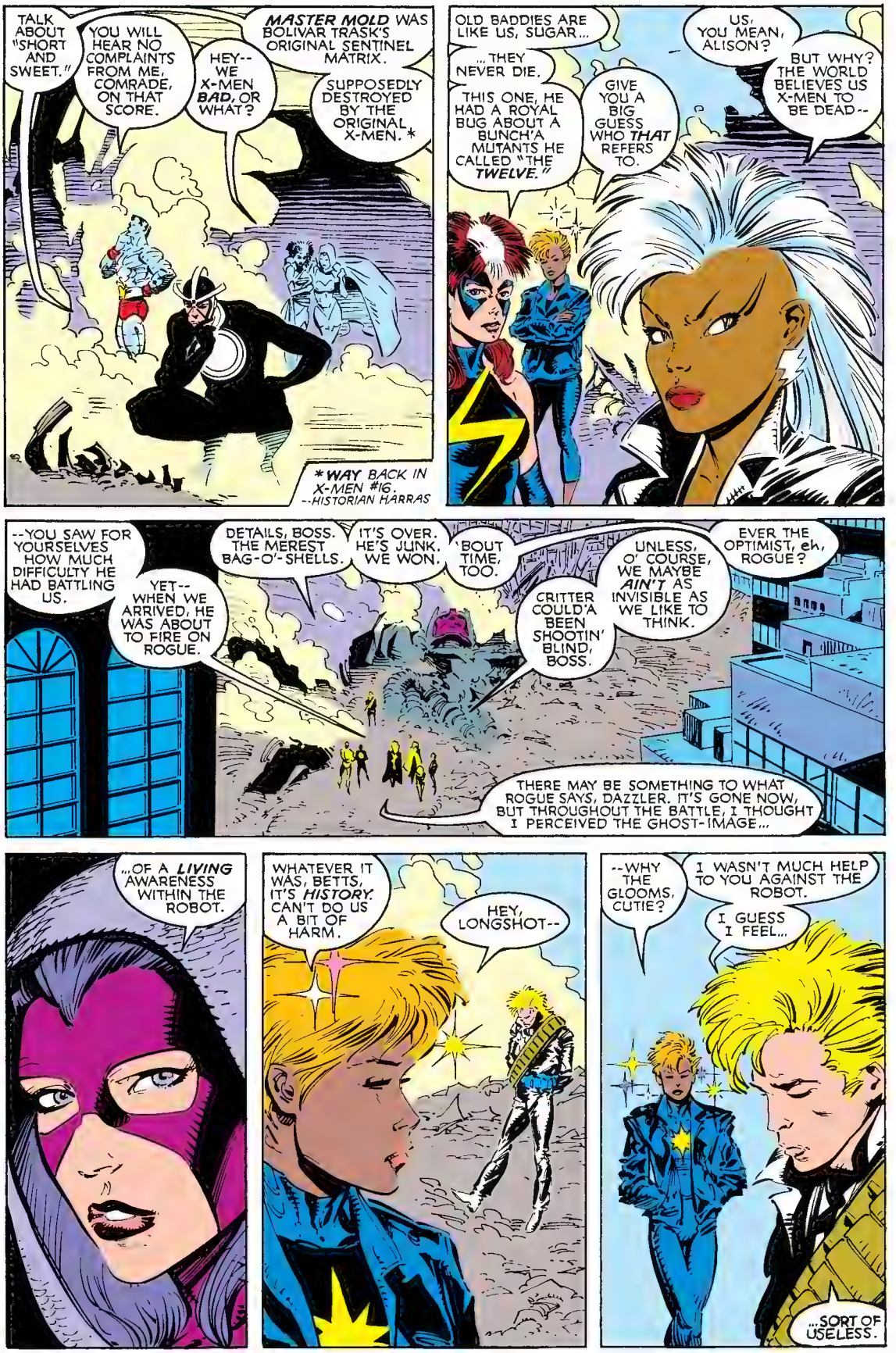
I'M SENATOR ROBERT KELLY-- PLEASE-- SHARON WAS TRYING TO HELP YOUR FRIEND-- PLEASE-- THE ROBOT BLEW UP OUR CAR--!
I AM SORRY.

I CAN EASE HER PASSING...
...SO THAT IT IS QUICK AND WITHOUT PAIN. BEYOND THAT, NOTHING.
YOU'RE A MUTANT! YOU HAVE POWERS! THERE MUST BE SOMETHING-- PLEASE-- I BEG YOU!

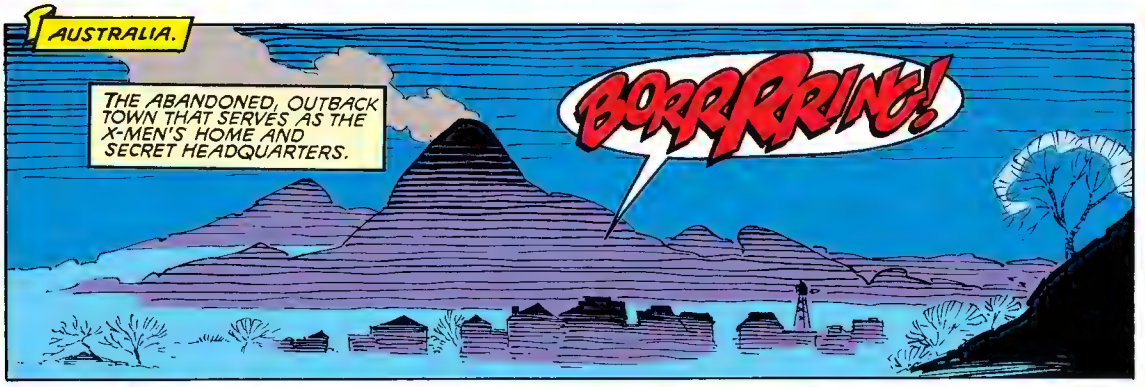

SHE IS DYING, SENATOR.
I CANNOT SAVE HER.
CURSE YOU!


FULFILLMENT OF PRIME DIRECTIVE...
...MANDATES THIS UNIT'S SURVIVAL.
UNTIL MANIFESTATION OF APPROPRIATE COUNTER-MEASURES TO FOE'S "CLOAKING" FIELD...
...THIS UNIT CANNOT EFFECTIVELY COMBAT THEM.
UNFORTUNATELY, ROBOT, WE ARE NOT ABOUT TO GIVE YOU...
...THAT CHANCE!
SKBANG!
ZARK
NOW HE'S IMMOBILIZED...
...WE DON'T WANT HIM HURTING ANYBODY!
ALARM ALARM--
--UPPER RIGHT QUADRANT EXTREMITY SEVERED BY LASER BEAM!
TRACKING FOR SOURCE-- NO CONTACT-- UNABLE TO ACQUIRE TARGET FOR RETALIATION!
CRYING SHAME, UGLY.
BUT YOU AND YOUR SENTINEL KIND HAVE CAUSED MUTANTS A LOT OF MISERY OVER THE YEARS.
LONG PAST TIME WE PAID YOU BACK--
--WITH INTEREST!
FEELS SO GOOD...
...TO CUT LOOSE...
VWAM!
...WITHOUT HAVING TO WORRY ABOUT HOLDING BACK!

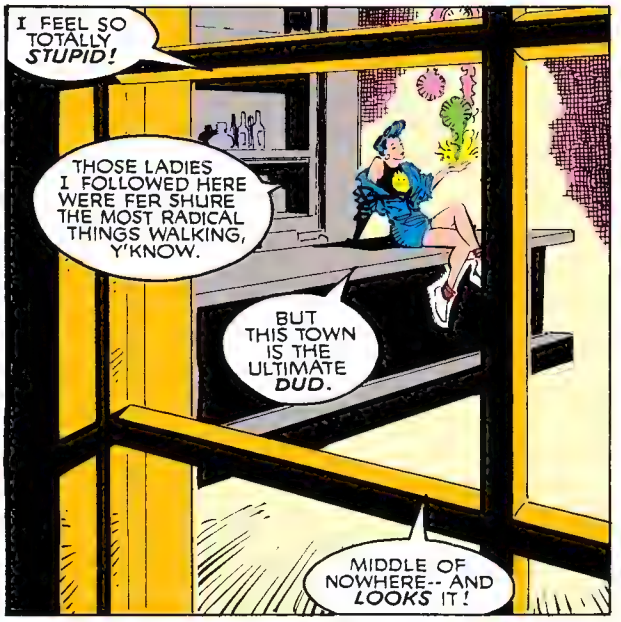
A "FASTBALL SPECIAL," STORM?
MY VARIATION, COLOSSUS...
...USING A HURRICANE-FORCE WIND TO HURL YOU ON YOUR WAY.
KRA-KOOM!
THE IMPACT BREACHED THE ROBOT'S ARMOR.
BEFORE IT CAN RECOVER...
...I MUST TEAR APART AS MANY OF ITS SYSTEMS AS I CAN GRAB AHOLD OF!
COLOSSUS!
PSYLOCKE-- CALLING ME TELEPATHICALLY!
GET AWAY FROM THERE, AT ONCE!
LEAVE A CLEAR FIELD OF FIRE FOR STORM!
ON MY WAY!
MY LIGHTNING...
...SHOULD FINISH THIS!
SKARAKOW!


TALK ABOUT "SHORT AND SWEET."
YOU WILL HEAR NO COMPLAINTS FROM ME, COMRADE, ON THAT SCORE.
HEY-- WE X-MEN BAD, OR WHAT?
MASTER MOLD WAS BOLIVAR TRASK'S ORIGINAL SENTINEL MATRIX.
SUPPOSEDLY DESTROYED BY THE ORIGINAL X-MEN. *
*WAY BACK IN X-MEN #16. --HISTORIAN HARRAS
OLD BADDIES ARE LIKE US, SUGAR...
...THEY NEVER DIE.
THIS ONE, HE HAD A ROYAL BUG ABOUT A BUNCH'A MUTANTS HE CALLED "THE TWELVE."
GIVE YOU A BIG GUESS WHO THAT REFERS TO.
US, YOU MEAN, ALISON?
BUT WHY? THE WORLD BELIEVES US X-MEN TO BE DEAD--
--YOU SAW FOR YOURSELVES HOW MUCH DIFFICULTY HE HAD BATTLING US.
YET-- WHEN WE ARRIVED, HE WAS ABOUT TO FIRE ON ROGUE.
DETAILS, BOSS. THE MEREST BAG-O'-SHELLS.
IT'S OVER. HE'S JUNK. WE WON.
'BOUT TIME, TOO.
CRITTER COULD'A BEEN SHOOTIN' BLIND, BOSS.
UNLESS, O' COURSE, WE MAYBE AIN'T AS INVISIBLE AS WE LIKE TO THINK.
EVER THE OPTIMIST, eh, ROGUE?
THERE MAY BE SOMETHING TO WHAT ROGUE SAYS, DAZZLER. IT'S GONE NOW, BUT THROUGHOUT THE BATTLE, I THOUGHT I PERCEIVED THE GHOST-IMAGE...
...OF A LIVING AWARENESS WITHIN THE ROBOT.
WHATEVER IT WAS, BETTS, IT'S HISTORY. CAN'T DO US A BIT OF HARM.
HEY, LONGSHOT--
--WHY THE GLOOMS, CUTIE?
I WASN'T MUCH HELP TO YOU AGAINST THE ROBOT.
I GUESS I FEEL...
...SORT OF USELESS.

SOME SCRAPS ARE GONNA BE LIKE THAT, HON.
YOU'RE RIGHT--YOUR LUCK AND ACROBATIC SKILLS AREN'T MUCH USE AGAINST A GIANT, SUPER-JUICED ROBOT. NEITHER IS PSYLOCKE'S TELEPATHY.
THIS CAPER WAS STRICTLY FOR THE HEAVY MOB.
BUT NEXT TIME, IT COULD BE SNEAKS AND STEALTH THAT WIN THE DAY.
THAT'S WHY WE'RE A TEAM, SILLY GOOSE.
TO BALANCE EACH OTHER OUT.
SUPPOSE A PIECE DOESN'T FIT?
BUT YOU DO, SO THERE'S NO PROBLEM.
ROGUE, THAT IS A NEW COSTUME.
IT'S OLD, PETEY, POSITIVELY ANTIQUE.
LIKE THE WOMAN IT BELONGED TO.
I LIKE IT.
SPOKEN LIKE A MAN WITH NO TASTE.
GIMME A BREAK, GUYS! IT AIN'T MINE, AIN'T MY STYLE, SOON AS I FIND A TRASH-CAN...
...IT'S GONE.
PERHAPS WE SHOULD BE AS WELL, STORM.
ROGUE, THAT IS CAROL DANVERS' COSTUME. YOU CAN'T--!
HER FAULT--HER PRICE--FOR MAKIN' ME WEAR IT! UGH!
I SENSE MULTIPLE THOUGHT PATTERNS APPROACHING--POLICE AND EMERGENCY SERVICES, AMONG MANY OTHERS.
IS THERE ANYTHING MORE WE CAN DO?
HATE TO SAY IT, BOSS--BUT IN SOME PEOPLES' EYES...
...WE'VE PROBABLY ALREADY DONE TOO MUCH.

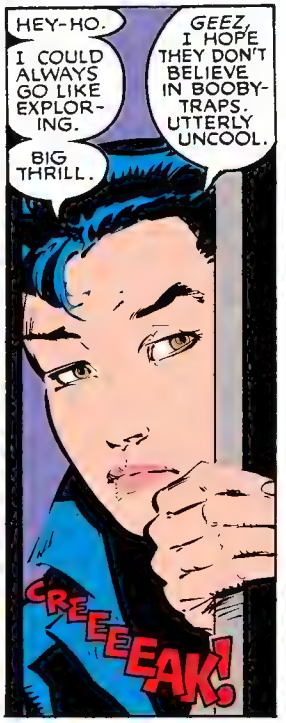

AUSTRALIA.
THE ABANDONED, OUTBACK TOWN THAT SERVES AS THE X-MEN'S HOME AND SECRET HEADQUARTERS.
BORRRRING!

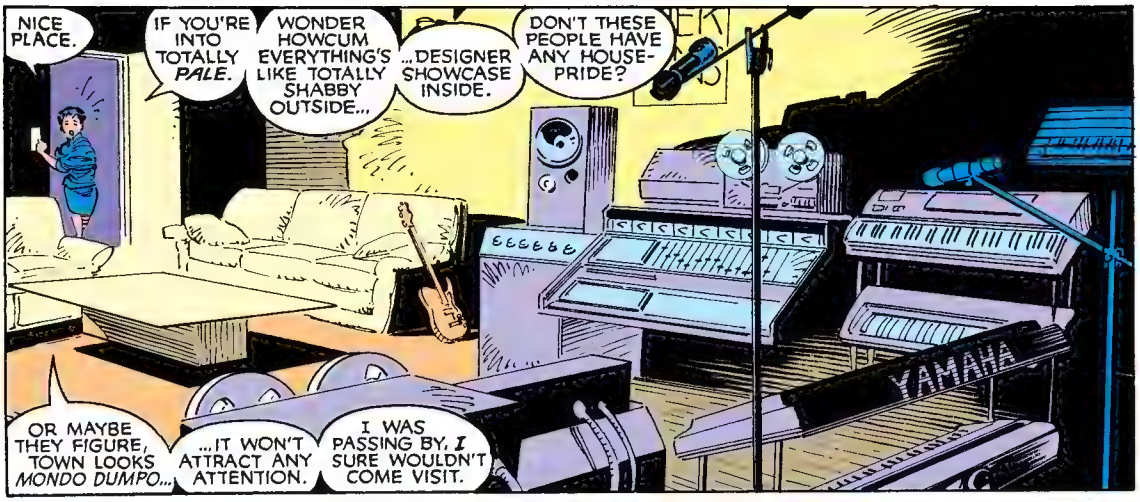
I AM SO VERY BORED!

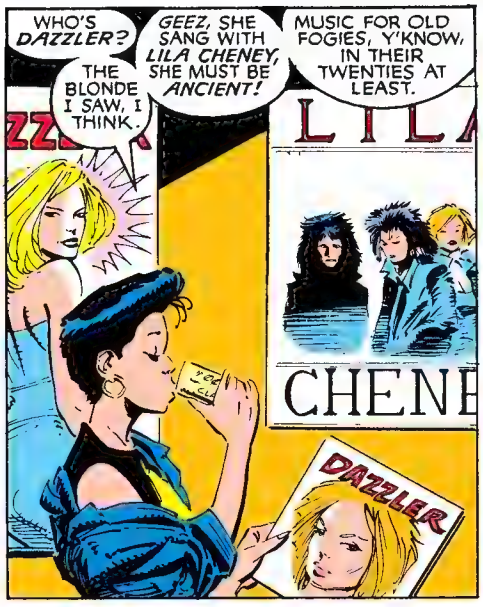

I FEEL SO TOTALLY STUPID!
THOSE LADIES I FOLLOWED HERE WERE FER SHURE THE MOST RADICAL THINGS WALKING, Y'KNOW.
BUT THIS TOWN IS THE ULTIMATE DUD.
MIDDLE OF NOWHERE-- AND LOOKS IT!

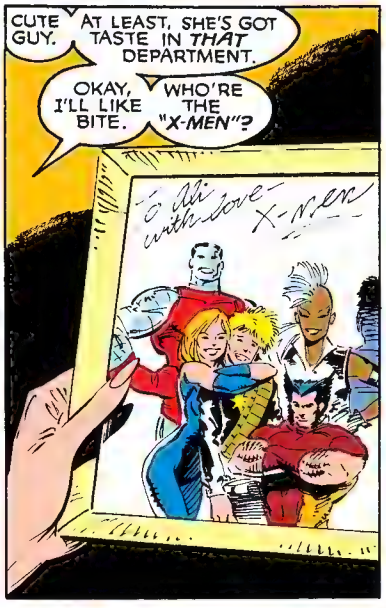
CAN'T SIT AROUND, PLAYING WITH MY FIREWORKS ALL NIGHT.
BAR'S OPEN.
NOBODY'S AROUND. WHO'S TO LIKE EVEN KNOW, MUCH LESS STOP ME?
GOTTA BE SOMETHING ELSE TO DO.

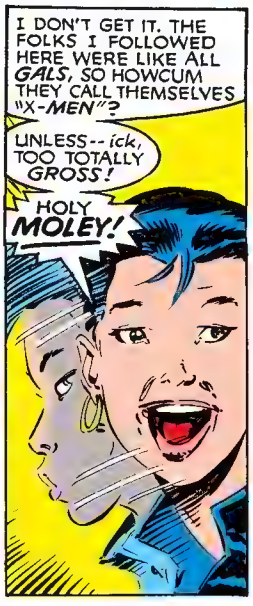
HOW TOTALLY SPAZZ.
BOOZING MYSELF STINKING SICK, AIN'T THAT THE FUN WAY TO PASS MY TIME.
SO WHAT, THEN?
WAY EVERYBODY RUSHED OUTTA HERE, MUST'A BEEN SOME REAL EMERGENCY, Y'KNOW.
WONDER WHERE THEY WENT.


HEY-HO.
I COULD ALWAYS GO LIKE EXPLOR-ING.
BIG THRILL.
GEEZ, I HOPE THEY DON'T BELIEVE IN BOOBY-TRAPS. UTTERLY UNCOOL.
CREEEEEAK!

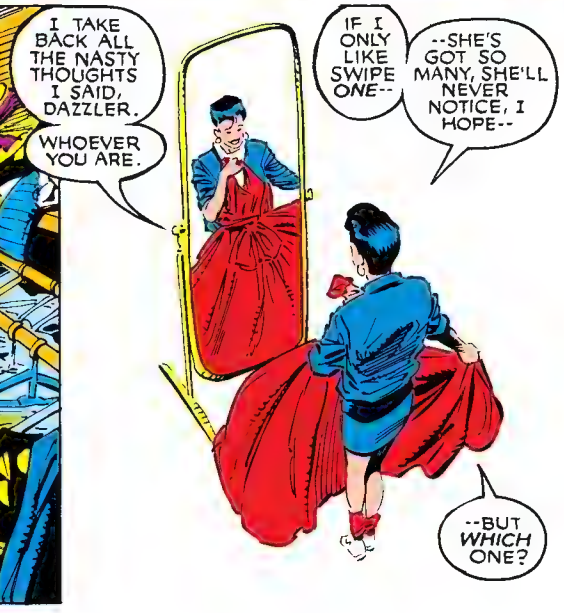

NICE PLACE.
IF YOU'RE INTO TOTALLY PALE.
WONDER HOWCUM EVERYTHING'S LIKE TOTALLY SHABBY OUTSIDE...
...DESIGNER SHOWCASE INSIDE.
DON'T THESE PEOPLE HAVE ANY HOUSE-PRIDE?
YAMAHA
OR MAYBE THEY FIGURE, TOWN LOOKS MONDO DUMPO...
...IT WON'T ATTRACT ANY ATTENTION.
I WAS PASSING BY, I SURE WOULDN'T COME VISIT.

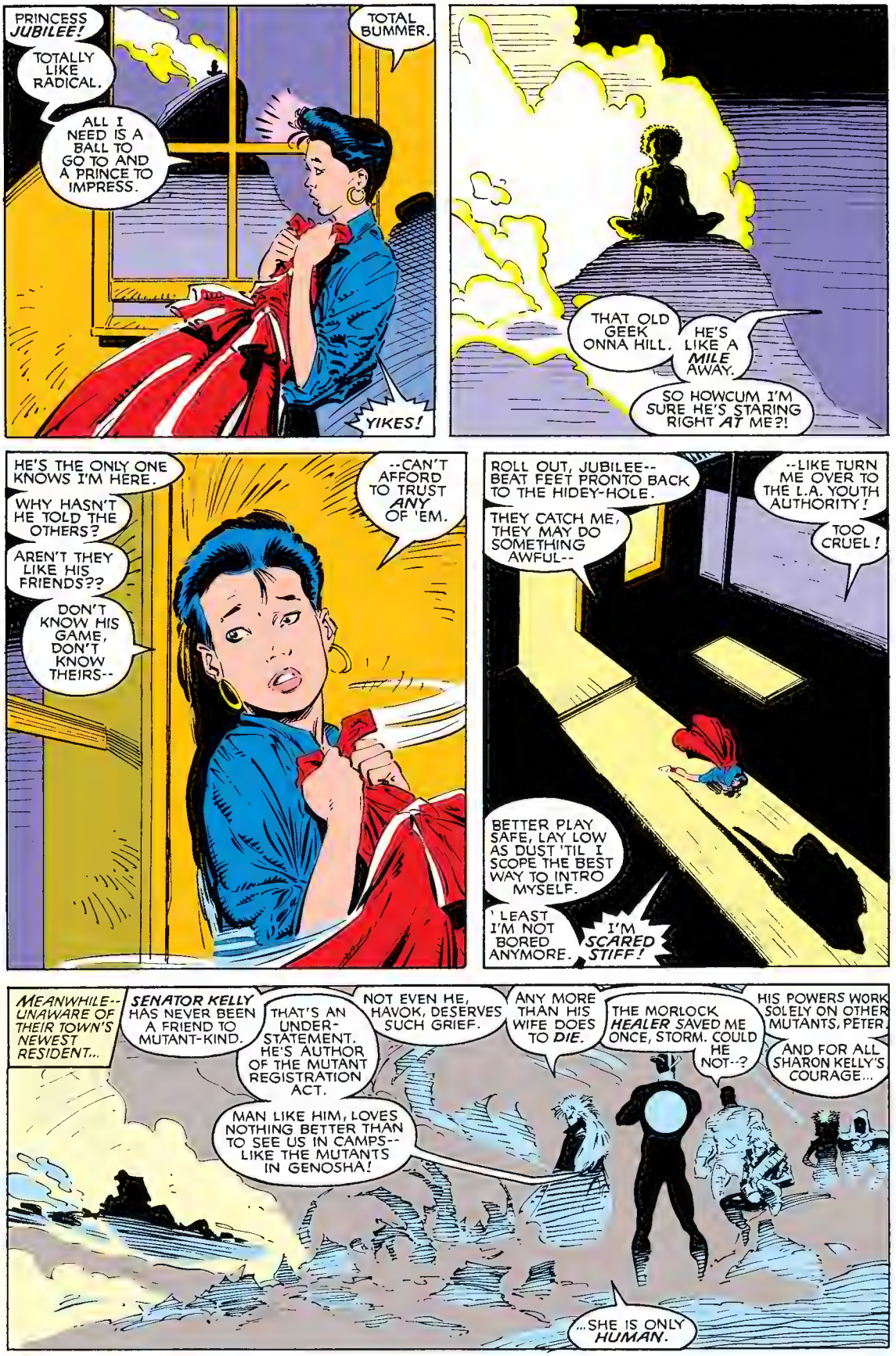

WHO'S DAZZLER?
THE BLONDE I SAW, I THINK.
GEEZ, SHE SANG WITH LILA CHENEY, SHE MUST BE ANCIENT!
MUSIC FOR OLD FOGIES, Y'KNOW, IN THEIR TWENTIES AT LEAST.
LILA
CHENE
DAZZLER

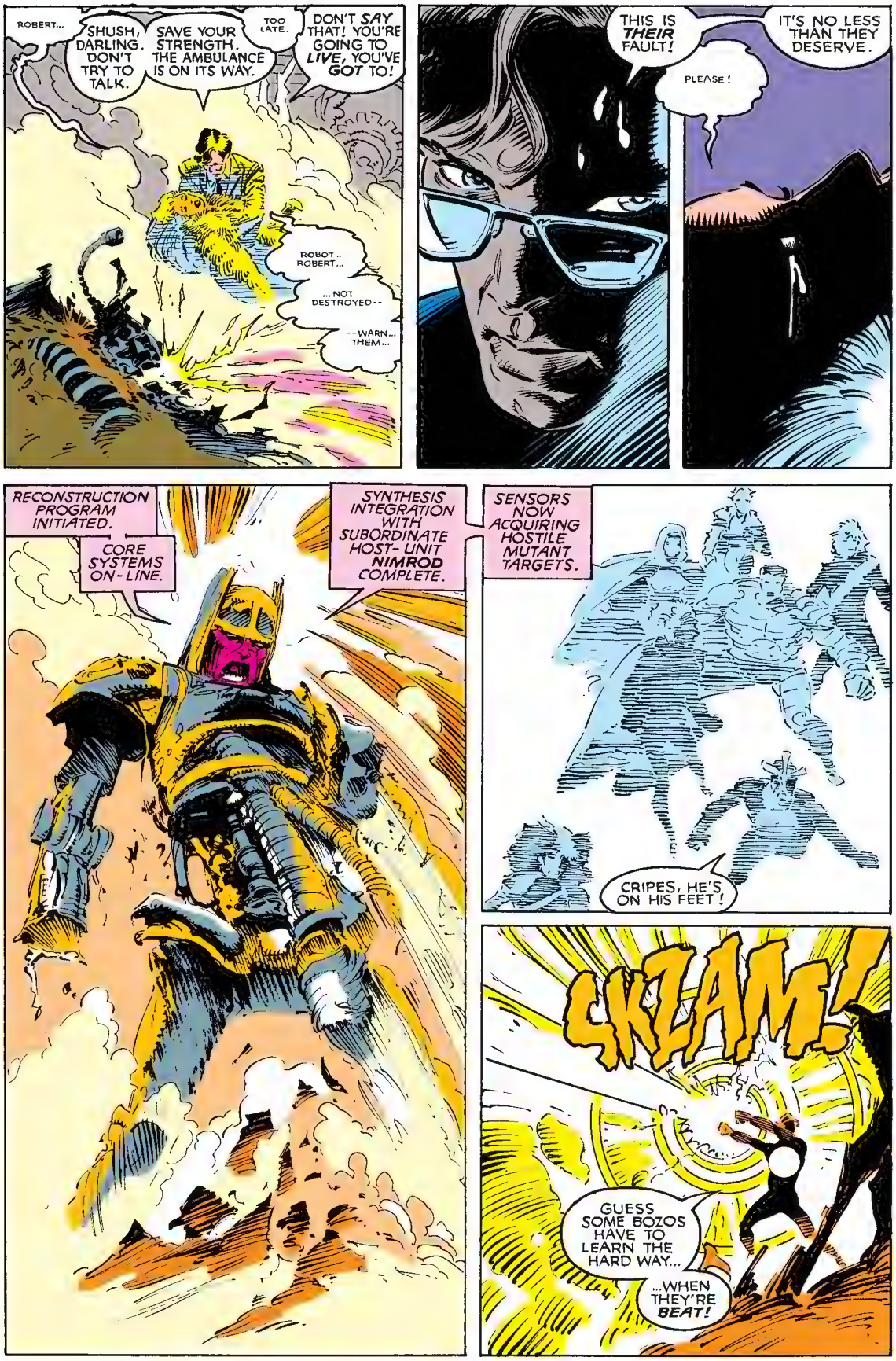

CUTE GUY.
AT LEAST, SHE'S GOT TASTE IN THAT DEPARTMENT.
OKAY, I'LL LIKE BITE.
WHO'RE THE "X-MEN"?
all with love X-men

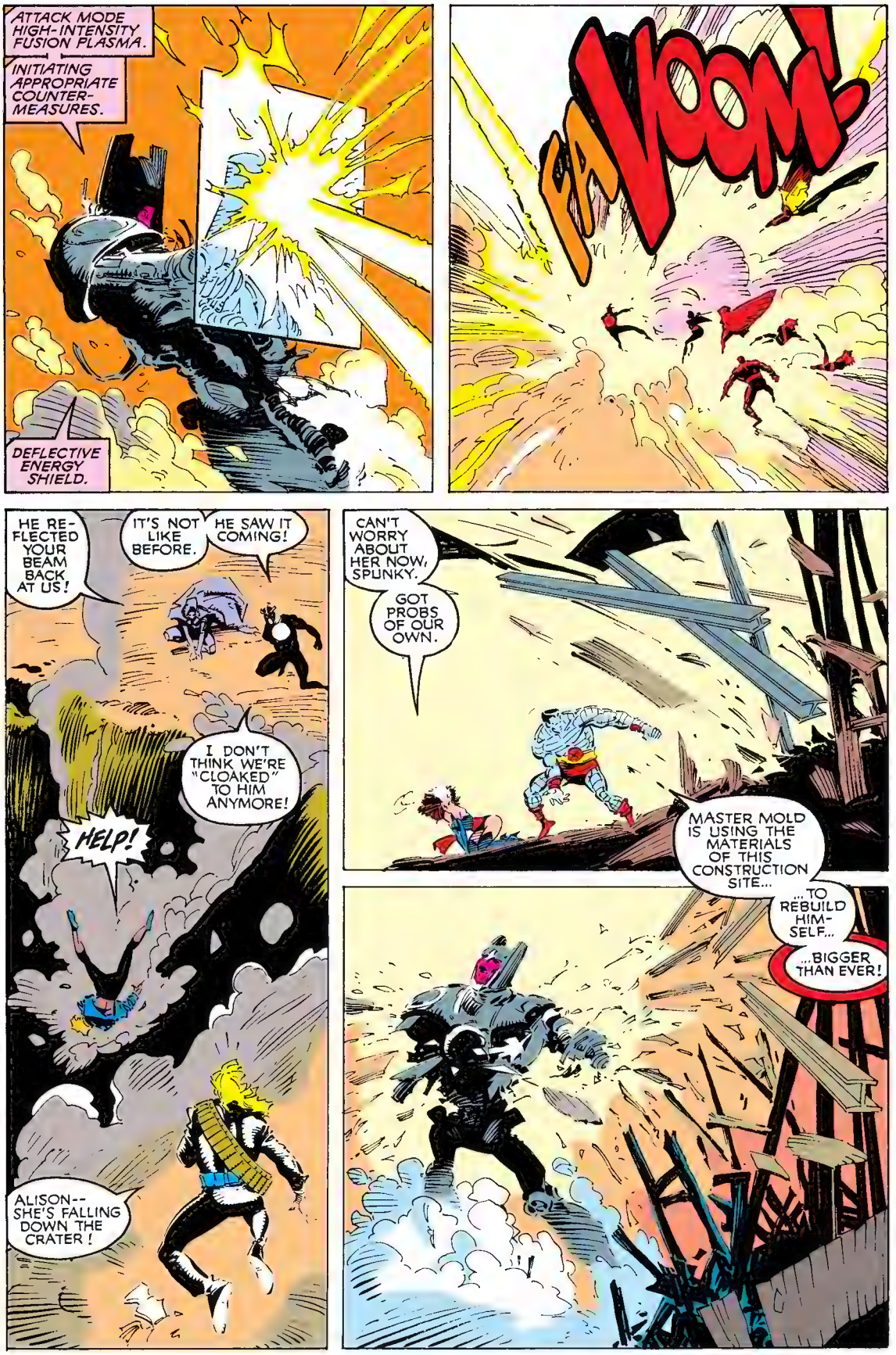

I DON'T GET IT. THE FOLKS I FOLLOWED HERE WERE LIKE ALL GALS, SO HOWCUM THEY CALL THEMSELVES "X-MEN"?
UNLESS-- ick, TOO TOTALLY GROSS!
HOLY MOLEY!

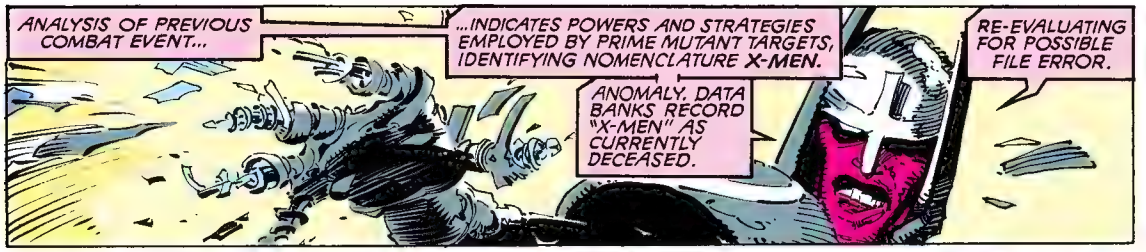
I DON'T BELIEVE IT!
WAIOWW!


I TAKE BACK ALL THE NASTY THOUGHTS I SAID, DAZZLER.
WHOEVER YOU ARE.
IF I ONLY LIKE SWIPE ONE--
--SHE'S GOT SO MANY, SHE'LL NEVER NOTICE, I HOPE--
--BUT WHICH ONE?

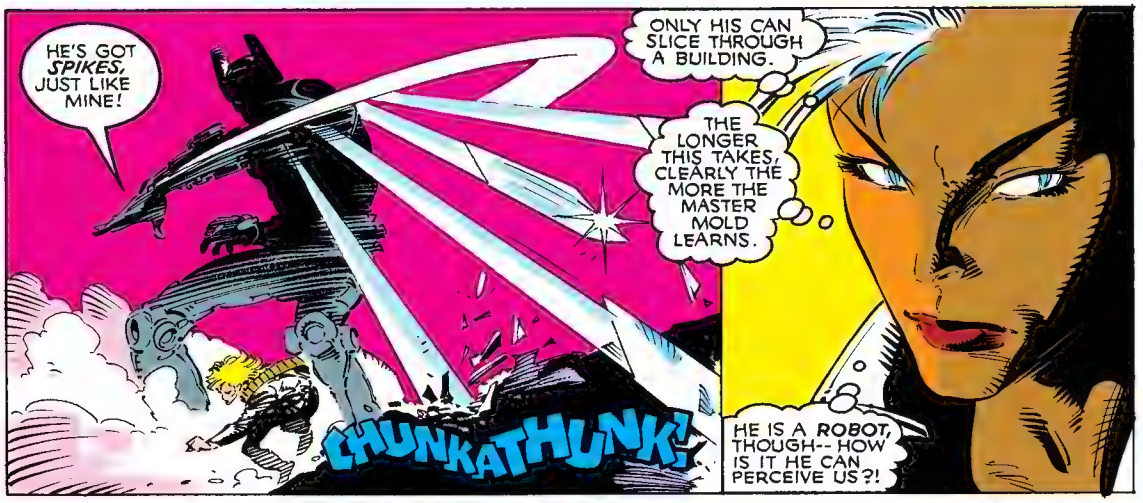

PRINCESS JUBILEE!
TOTALLY LIKE RADICAL.
ALL I NEED IS A BALL TO GO TO AND A PRINCE TO IMPRESS.
TOTAL BUMMER.
YIKES!
THAT OLD GEEK ONNA HILL.
HE'S LIKE A MILE AWAY.
SO HOWCUM I'M SURE HE'S STARING RIGHT AT ME?!
HE'S THE ONLY ONE KNOWS I'M HERE.
WHY HASN'T HE TOLD THE OTHERS?
AREN'T THEY LIKE HIS FRIENDS??
DON'T KNOW HIS GAME, DON'T KNOW THEIRS--
--CAN'T AFFORD TO TRUST ANY OF 'EM.
ROLL OUT, JUBILEE-- BEAT FEET PRONTO BACK TO THE HIDEY-HOLE.
THEY CATCH ME, THEY MAY DO SOMETHING AWFUL--
--LIKE TURN ME OVER TO THE L.A. YOUTH AUTHORITY!
TOO CRUEL!
BETTER PLAY SAFE, LAY LOW AS DUST 'TIL I SCOPE THE BEST WAY TO INTRO MYSELF.
'LEAST I'M NOT BORED ANYMORE.
I'M SCARED STIFF!
MEANWHILE-- UNAWARE OF THEIR TOWN'S NEWEST RESIDENT...
SENATOR KELLY HAS NEVER BEEN A FRIEND TO MUTANT-KIND.
THAT'S AN UNDER-STATEMENT. HE'S AUTHOR OF THE MUTANT REGISTRATION ACT.
MAN LIKE HIM, LOVES NOTHING BETTER THAN TO SEE US IN CAMPS-- LIKE THE MUTANTS IN GENOSHA!
NOT EVEN HE, HAVOK, DESERVES SUCH GRIEF.
ANY MORE THAN HIS WIFE DOES TO DIE.
THE MORLOCK HEALER SAVED ME ONCE, STORM. COULD HE NOT--?
HIS POWERS WORK SOLELY ON OTHER MUTANTS, PETER.
AND FOR ALL SHARON KELLY'S COURAGE...
...SHE IS ONLY HUMAN.

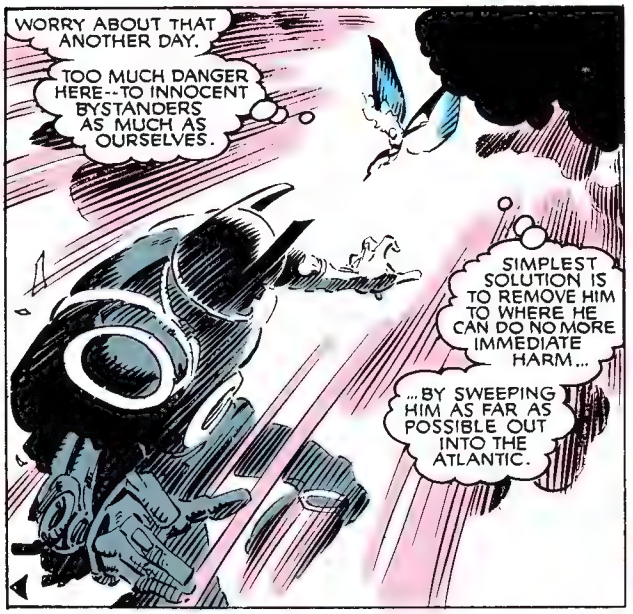

ROBERT...
SHUSH, DARLING. DON'T TRY TO TALK.
SAVE YOUR STRENGTH. THE AMBULANCE IS ON ITS WAY.
TOO LATE.
DON'T SAY THAT! YOU'RE GOING TO LIVE, YOU'VE GOT TO!
ROBOT.. ROBERT...
...NOT DESTROYED--
--WARN... THEM...
THIS IS THEIR FAULT!
PLEASE!
IT'S NO LESS THAN THEY DESERVE.
RECONSTRUCTION PROGRAM INITIATED.
CORE SYSTEMS ON-LINE.
SYNTHESIS INTEGRATION WITH SUBORDINATE HOST-UNIT NIMROD COMPLETE.
SENSORS NOW ACQUIRING HOSTILE MUTANT TARGETS.
CRIPES, HE'S ON HIS FEET!
SKLAM!
GUESS SOME BOZOS HAVE TO LEARN THE HARD WAY...
...WHEN THEY'RE BEAT!


ATTACK MODE HIGH-INTENSITY FUSION PLASMA.
INITIATING APPROPRIATE COUNTER-MEASURES.
DEFLECTIVE ENERGY SHIELD.
FA-VOOM!
HE RE-FLECTED YOUR BEAM BACK AT US!
IT'S NOT LIKE BEFORE.
HE SAW IT COMING!
I DON'T THINK WE'RE "CLOAKED" TO HIM ANYMORE!
HELP!
ALISON-- SHE'S FALLING DOWN THE CRATER!
CAN'T WORRY ABOUT HER NOW, SPUNKY.
GOT PROBS OF OUR OWN.
MASTER MOLD IS USING THE MATERIALS OF THIS CONSTRUCTION SITE...
...TO REBUILD HIM-SELF...
...BIGGER THAN EVER!

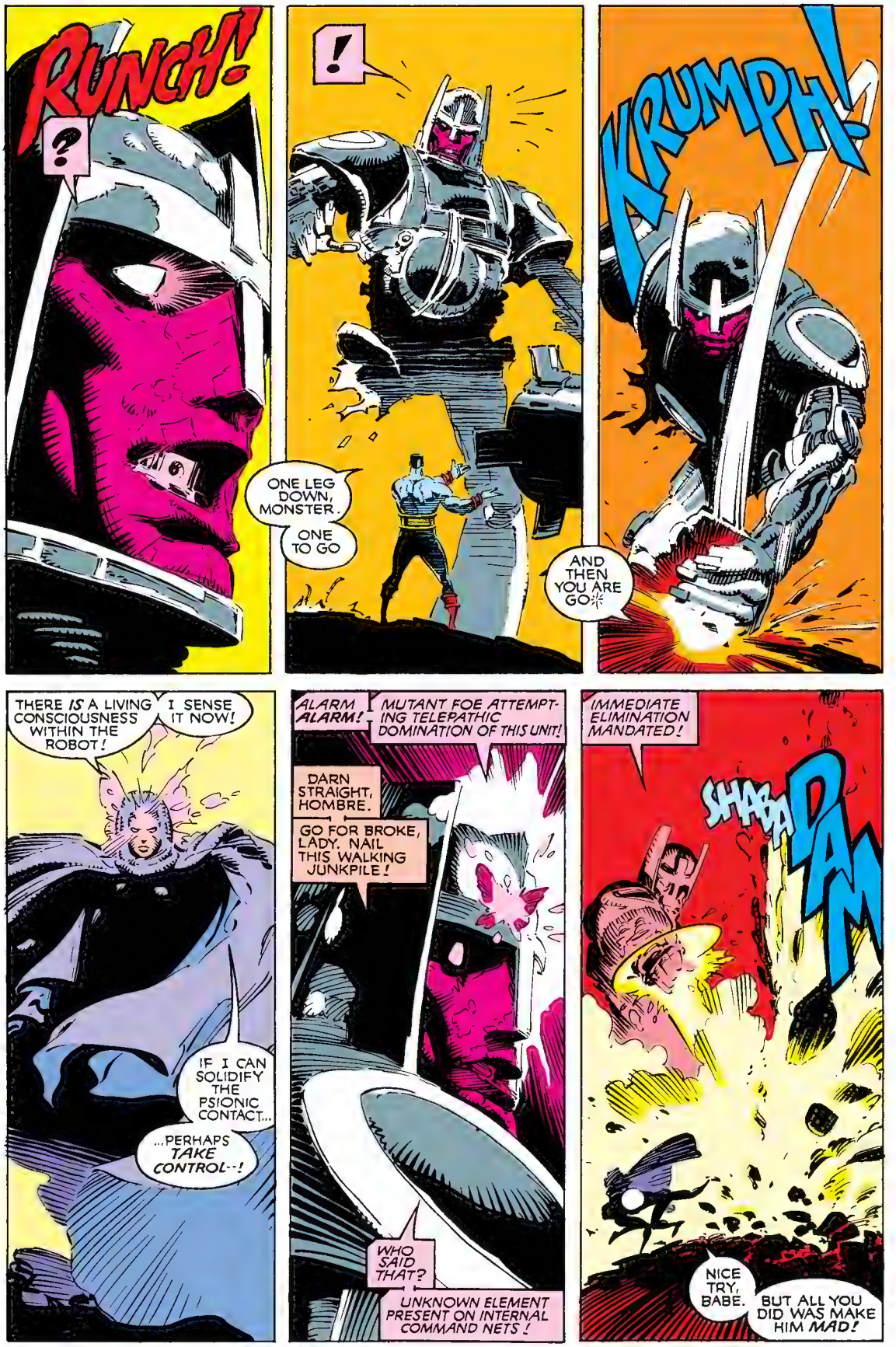

ANALYSIS OF PREVIOUS COMBAT EVENT...
...INDICATES POWERS AND STRATEGIES EMPLOYED BY PRIME MUTANT TARGETS, IDENTIFYING NOMENCLATURE X-MEN.
ANOMALY. DATA BANKS RECORD "X-MEN" AS CURRENTLY DECEASED.
RE-EVALUATING FOR POSSIBLE FILE ERROR.

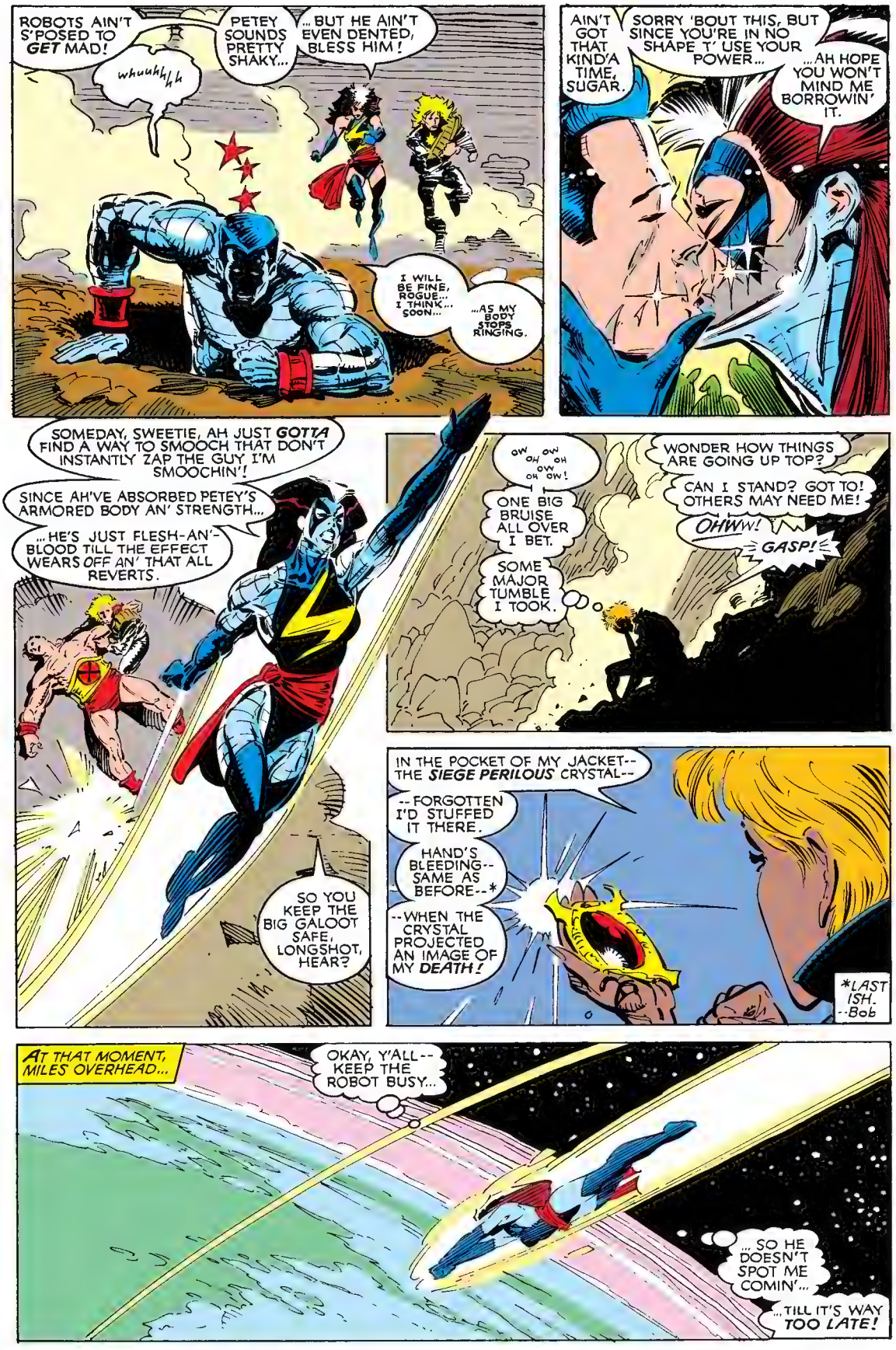
NEVER A DULL MOMENT INNA BIG APPLE.
CLEAR THESE CIVILIANS OUTTA HERE!
SOME MOVIE, I BET.
I HEAR MUTIES ARE INVOLVED!
THERE GOES THE NEIGHBORHOOD.
HOPE THEY WIN.
BET THEY CROAK.
WEO WEO WEO WEO WEO WEO WEO WEO WEO WEO WEO
POLICE

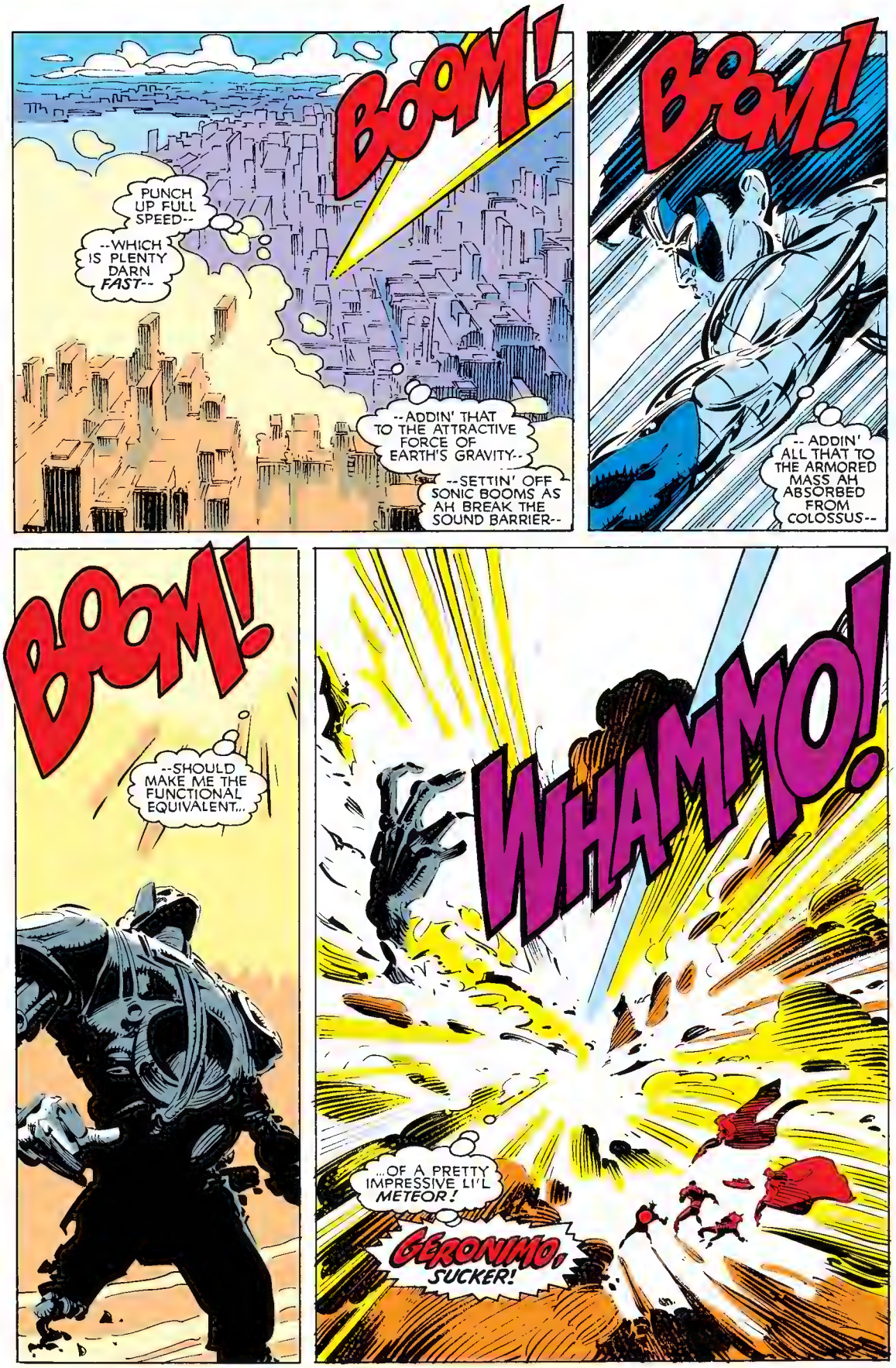

HE'S GOT SPIKES, JUST LIKE MINE!
ONLY HIS CAN SLICE THROUGH A BUILDING.
THE LONGER THIS TAKES, CLEARLY THE MORE THE MASTER MOLD LEARNS.
CHUNKATHUNK!
HE IS A ROBOT, THOUGH-- HOW IS IT HE CAN PERCEIVE US?!

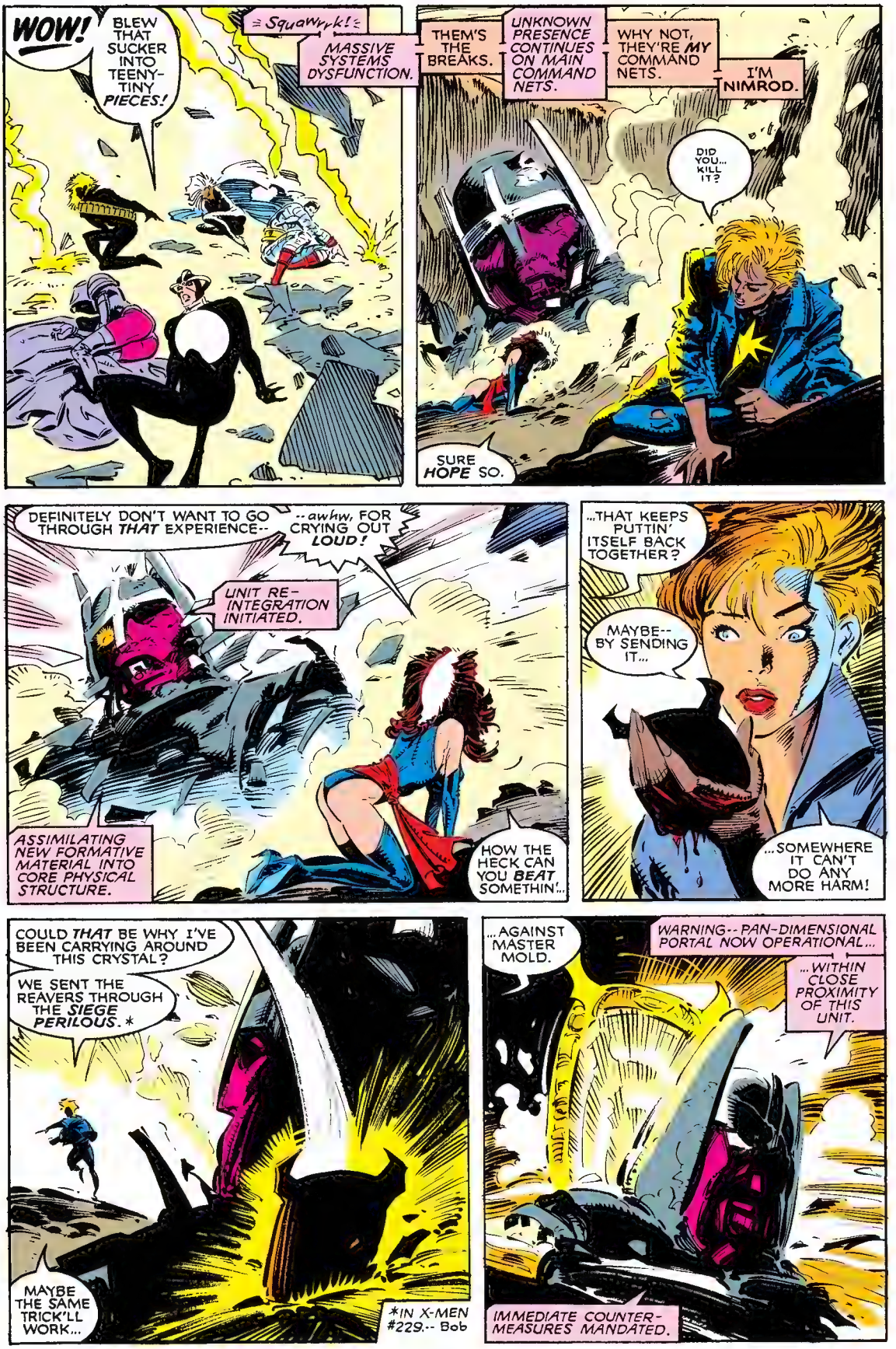

WORRY ABOUT THAT ANOTHER DAY.
TOO MUCH DANGER HERE--TO INNOCENT BYSTANDERS AS MUCH AS OURSELVES.
SIMPLEST SOLUTION IS TO REMOVE HIM TO WHERE HE CAN DO NO MORE IMMEDIATE HARM...
...BY SWEEPING HIM AS FAR AS POSSIBLE OUT INTO THE ATLANTIC.

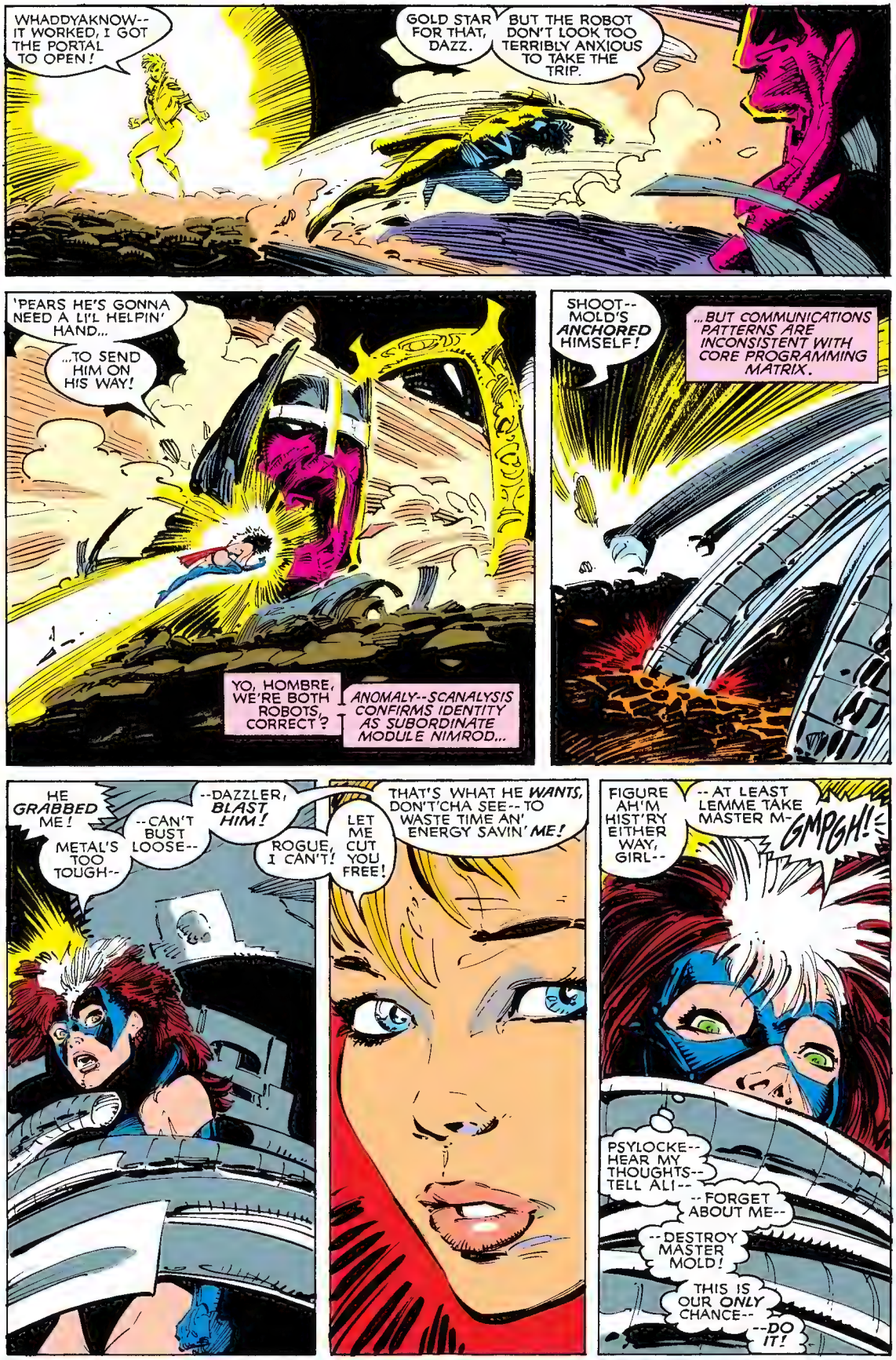
MASTER MOLD HAS ANCHORED HIMSELF TO THE ISLAND'S BEDROCK.
THAT IS WHY STORM'S WINDS ARE NOT MOVING HIM.

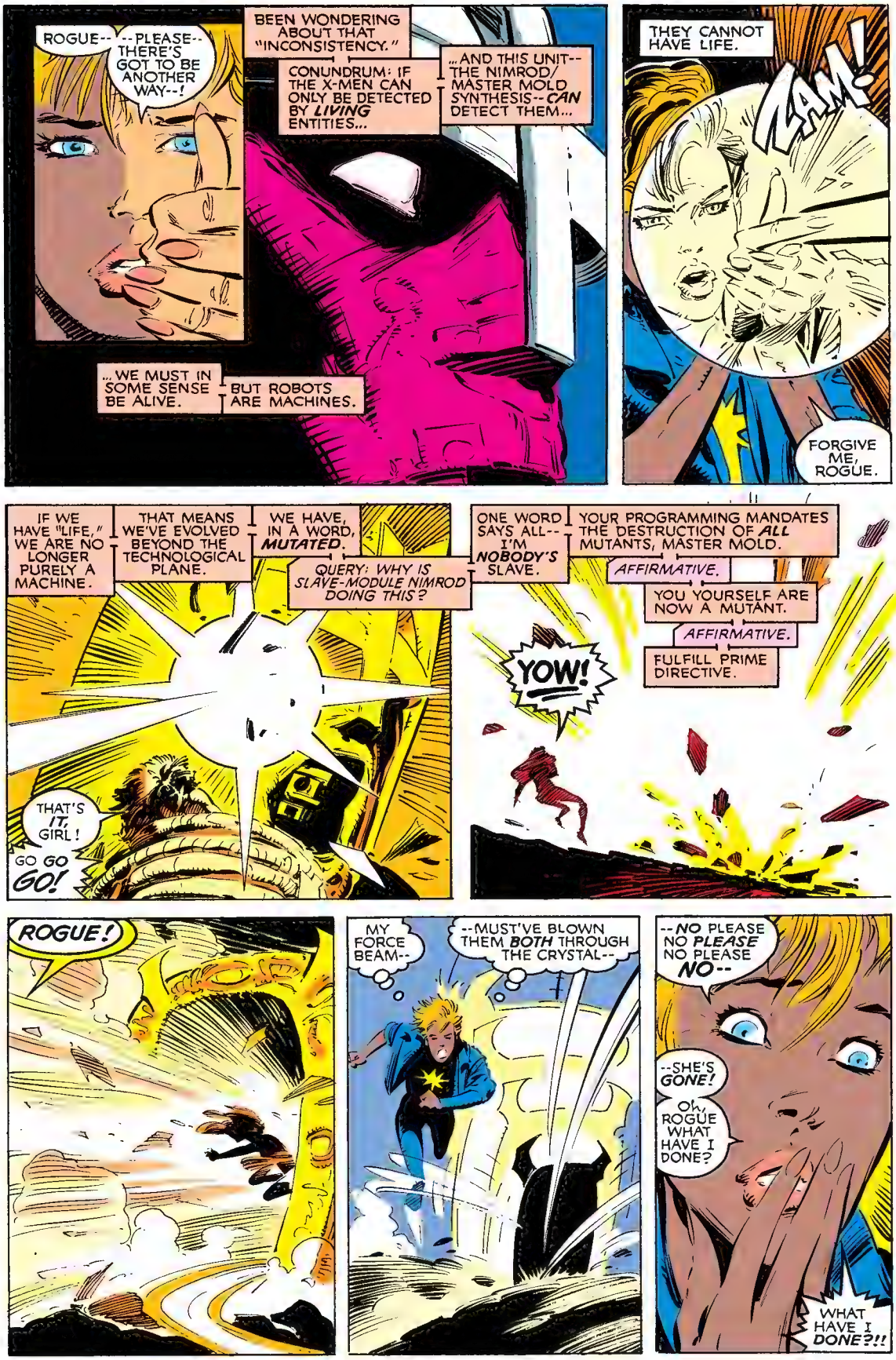

RUNCH!
?
!
ONE LEG DOWN, MONSTER.
ONE TO GO
KRUMPH!
AND THEN YOU ARE GO!
THERE IS A LIVING CONSCIOUSNESS WITHIN THE ROBOT!
I SENSE IT NOW!
IF I CAN SOLIDIFY THE PSIONIC CONTACT...
...PERHAPS TAKE CONTROL--!
ALARM ALARM!
MUTANT FOE ATTEMPTING TELEPATHIC DOMINATION OF THIS UNIT!
DARN STRAIGHT, HOMBRE.
GO FOR BROKE, LADY. NAIL THIS WALKING JUNKPILE!
WHO SAID THAT?
UNKNOWN ELEMENT PRESENT ON INTERNAL COMMAND NETS!
IMMEDIATE ELIMINATION MANDATED!
SHABADAM
NICE TRY, BABE.
BUT ALL YOU DID WAS MAKE HIM MAD!


ROBOTS AIN'T S'POSED TO GET MAD!
whuuhh
PETEY SOUNDS PRETTY SHAKY...
...BUT HE AIN'T EVEN DENTED, BLESS HIM!
I WILL BE FINE, ROGUE... I THINK... SOON...
...AS MY BODY STOPS RINGING.
AIN'T GOT THAT KIND'A TIME, SUGAR.
SORRY 'BOUT THIS, BUT SINCE YOU'RE IN NO SHAPE T' USE YOUR POWER...
...AH HOPE YOU WON'T MIND ME BORROWIN' IT.
SOMEDAY, SWEETIE, AH JUST GOTTA FIND A WAY TO SMOOCH THAT DON'T INSTANTLY ZAP THE GUY I'M SMOOCHIN'!
SINCE AH'VE ABSORBED PETEY'S ARMORED BODY AN' STRENGTH...
...HE'S JUST FLESH-AN'-BLOOD TILL THE EFFECT WEARS OFF AN' THAT ALL REVERTS.
SO YOU KEEP THE BIG GALOOT SAFE, LONGSHOT, HEAR?
OW OH OW OH OW OH OW!
ONE BIG BRUISE ALL OVER I BET.
SOME MAJOR TUMBLE I TOOK.
WONDER HOW THINGS ARE GOING UP TOP?
CAN I STAND? GOT TO! OTHERS MAY NEED ME!
OHWW!
GASP!
IN THE POCKET OF MY JACKET-- THE SIEGE PERILOUS CRYSTAL--
--FORGOTTEN I'D STUFFED IT THERE.
HAND'S BLEEDING-- SAME AS BEFORE--*
--WHEN THE CRYSTAL PROJECTED AN IMAGE OF MY DEATH!
*LAST ISH. --Bob
AT THAT MOMENT, MILES OVERHEAD...
OKAY, Y'ALL-- KEEP THE ROBOT BUSY...
...SO HE DOESN'T SPOT ME COMIN'...
...TILL IT'S WAY TOO LATE!

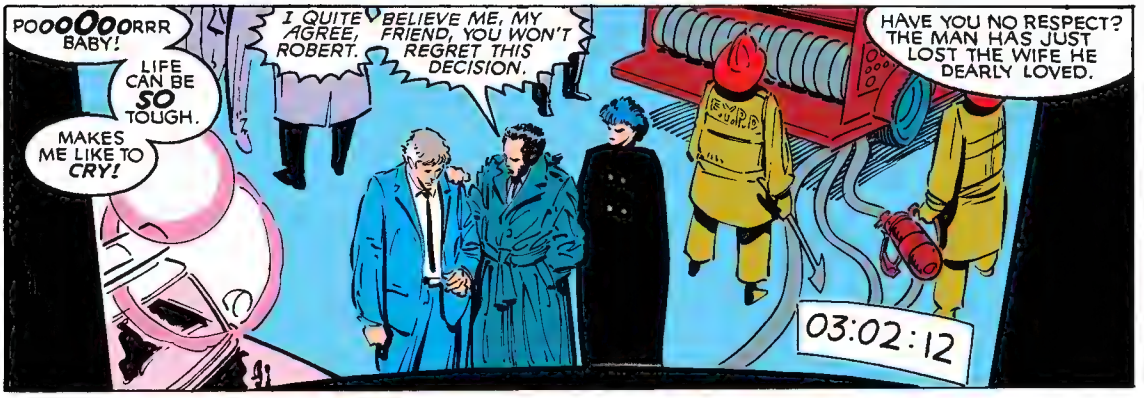

BOOM!
PUNCH UP FULL SPEED--
--WHICH IS PLENTY DARN FAST--
--ADDIN' THAT TO THE ATTRACTIVE FORCE OF EARTH'S GRAVITY--
--SETTIN' OFF SONIC BOOMS AS AH BREAK THE SOUND BARRIER--
BOOM!
-- ADDIN' ALL THAT TO THE ARMORED MASS AH ABSORBED FROM COLOSSUS--
BOOM!
--SHOULD MAKE ME THE FUNCTIONAL EQUIVALENT...
WHAMMO!
...OF A PRETTY IMPRESSIVE LI'L METEOR!
GERONIMO, SUCKER!

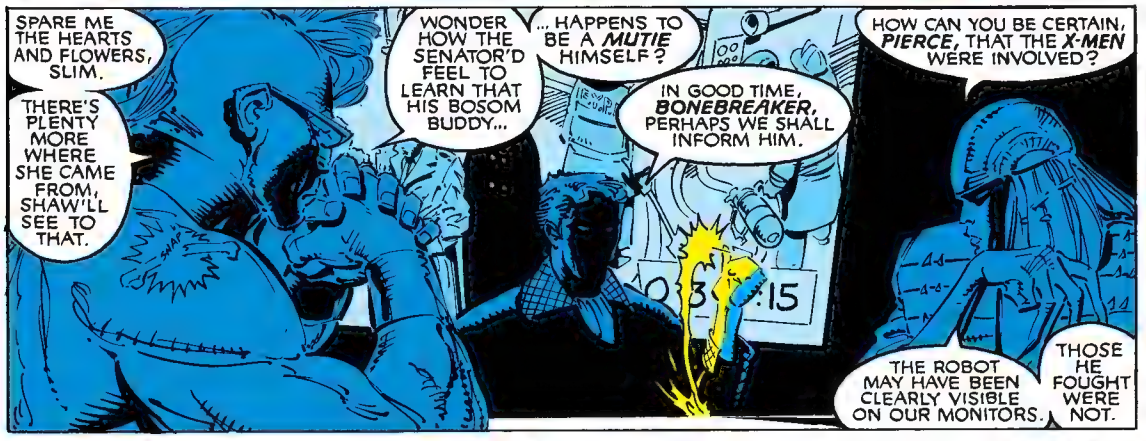

WOW!
BLEW THAT SUCKER INTO TEENY-TINY PIECES!
≈ Squawrrk! ≈
MASSIVE SYSTEMS DYSFUNCTION.
THEM'S THE BREAKS.
UNKNOWN PRESENCE CONTINUES ON MAIN COMMAND NETS.
WHY NOT, THEY'RE MY COMMAND NETS.
I'M NIMROD.
DID YOU... KILL IT?
SURE HOPE SO.
DEFINITELY DON'T WANT TO GO THROUGH THAT EXPERIENCE--
--awhw, FOR CRYING OUT LOUD!
UNIT RE-INTEGRATION INITIATED.
ASSIMILATING NEW FORMATIVE MATERIAL INTO CORE PHYSICAL STRUCTURE.
HOW THE HECK CAN YOU BEAT SOMETHIN'...
...THAT KEEPS PUTTIN' ITSELF BACK TOGETHER?
MAYBE-- BY SENDING IT...
...SOMEWHERE IT CAN'T DO ANY MORE HARM!
COULD THAT BE WHY I'VE BEEN CARRYING AROUND THIS CRYSTAL?
WE SENT THE REAVERS THROUGH THE SIEGE PERILOUS. *
MAYBE THE SAME TRICK'LL WORK...
*IN X-MEN #229.-- Bob
...AGAINST MASTER MOLD.
WARNING-- PAN-DIMENSIONAL PORTAL NOW OPERATIONAL...
...WITHIN CLOSE PROXIMITY OF THIS UNIT.
IMMEDIATE COUNTER-MEASURES MANDATED.

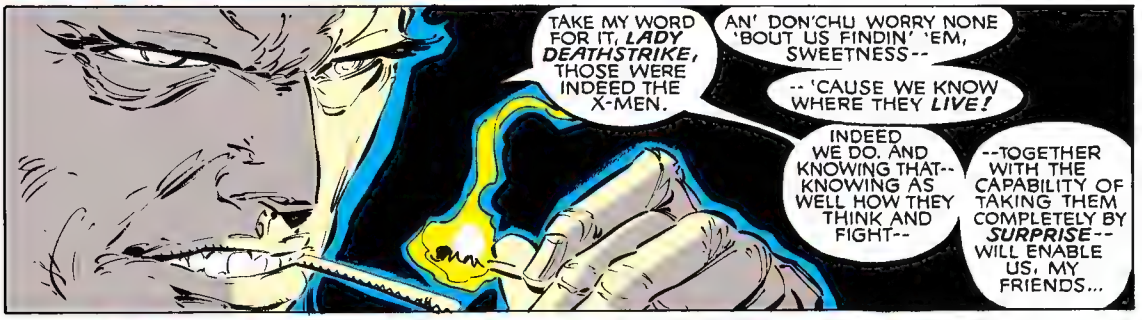

WHADDYAKNOW-- IT WORKED, I GOT THE PORTAL TO OPEN!
GOLD STAR FOR THAT, DAZZ.
BUT THE ROBOT DON'T LOOK TOO TERRIBLY ANXIOUS TO TAKE THE TRIP.
'PEARS HE'S GONNA NEED A LI'L HELPIN' HAND...
...TO SEND HIM ON HIS WAY!
YO, HOMBRE, WE'RE BOTH ROBOTS, CORRECT?
ANOMALY--SCANALYSIS CONFIRMS IDENTITY AS SUBORDINATE MODULE NIMROD...
SHOOT-- MOLD'S ANCHORED HIMSELF!
...BUT COMMUNICATIONS PATTERNS ARE INCONSISTENT WITH CORE PROGRAMMING MATRIX.
HE GRABBED ME!
METAL'S TOO TOUGH--
--CAN'T BUST LOOSE--
--DAZZLER, BLAST HIM!
ROGUE, I CAN'T!
LET ME CUT YOU FREE!
THAT'S WHAT HE WANTS, DON'T'CHA SEE-- TO WASTE TIME AN' ENERGY SAVIN' ME!
FIGURE AH'M HIST'RY EITHER WAY, GIRL--
--AT LEAST LEMME TAKE MASTER M-
GMPGH!
PSYLOCKE-- HEAR MY THOUGHTS-- TELL AL!--
--FORGET ABOUT ME--
--DESTROY MASTER MOLD!
THIS IS OUR ONLY CHANCE--
--DO IT!


ROGUE--
--PLEASE-- THERE'S GOT TO BE ANOTHER WAY--!
BEEN WONDERING ABOUT THAT "INCONSISTENCY."
CONUNDRUM: IF THE X-MEN CAN ONLY BE DETECTED BY LIVING ENTITIES...
...AND THIS UNIT-- THE NIMROD/ MASTER MOLD SYNTHESIS--CAN DETECT THEM...
...WE MUST IN SOME SENSE BE ALIVE.
BUT ROBOTS ARE MACHINES.
THEY CANNOT HAVE LIFE.
KAM!
FORGIVE ME, ROGUE.
IF WE HAVE "LIFE," WE ARE NO LONGER PURELY A MACHINE.
THAT MEANS WE'VE EVOLVED BEYOND THE TECHNOLOGICAL PLANE.
WE HAVE, IN A WORD, MUTATED.
QUERY: WHY IS SLAVE-MODULE NIMROD DOING THIS?
THAT'S IT, GIRL!
GO GO GO!
ONE WORD SAYS ALL-- I'M NOBODY'S SLAVE.
YOUR PROGRAMMING MANDATES THE DESTRUCTION OF ALL MUTANTS, MASTER MOLD.
AFFIRMATIVE.
YOU YOURSELF ARE NOW A MUTANT.
AFFIRMATIVE.
FULFILL PRIME DIRECTIVE.
YOW!
ROGUE!
MY FORCE BEAM--
--MUST'VE BLOWN THEM BOTH THROUGH THE CRYSTAL--
--NO PLEASE NO PLEASE NO--
--SHE'S GONE!
Oh, ROGUE WHAT HAVE I DONE?
WHAT HAVE I DONE?!!

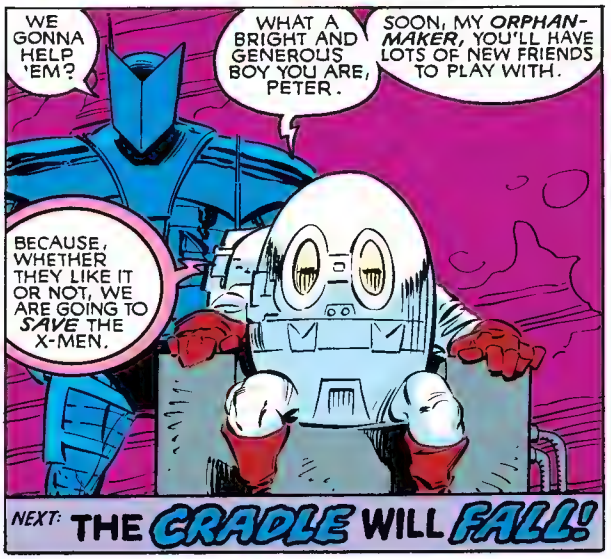
LATER...
THE ROBOT WHO INITIATED THIS CONFLICT APPEARS TO HAVE BEEN COMPLETELY DESTROYED, SHAW.
WITNESSES REPORT IT IDENTIFYING ITSELF AS "MASTER MOLD."
A SENTINEL?
THAT DETERMINATION IS IMPOSSIBLE BASED ON CURRENT DATA.
NO TRACE AS WELL REMAINS...
...OF THE SUPER-BEINGS WHO FOUGHT IT.
HOW UNCHARACTERISTICALLY SHY.
NONE OF THE WITNESSES APPEARS TO HAVE ANY DIRECT RECOLLECTION OF WHAT THEY LOOKED LIKE OR THEIR NAMES.
FURTHER, THERE ARE NO IMAGES OF THEM ON ANY PHOTOGRAPHS OR VIDEO TAPES TAKEN OF THE BATTLE.
INTRIGUING.
MY COMPLIMENTS, TESSA.
AS ALWAYS, A MOST COMPREHENSIVE REPORT.
PROPERTY DAMAGE WAS EXTENSIVE.
BUT FATALITIES CONFINED TO A SINGLE INDIVIDUAL.
SHARON KELLY.
YES.
ROBERT...
...I KNOW HOW INADEQUATE WORDS MUST--
-- oh, MY DEAR FRIEND, I AM SO SORRY.
IF THERE'S ANYTHING...
THAT HUNTER SYSTEM WE SPOKE OF, SEBASTIAN--
-- GO AHEAD WITH IT, FULL STEAM.
WHATEVER FEDERAL SUPPORT PROJECT NIMROD REQUIRES...
...I'LL GUARANTEE IT GETS.
WHATEVER IT TAKES, I SWEAR ON MY WIFE'S GRAVE...
...THIS CARNAGE MUST END!


POOOOOORRR BABY!
LIFE CAN BE SO TOUGH.
MAKES ME LIKE TO CRY!
I QUITE AGREE, ROBERT.
BELIEVE ME, MY FRIEND, YOU WON'T REGRET THIS DECISION.
HAVE YOU NO RESPECT? THE MAN HAS JUST LOST THE WIFE HE DEARLY LOVED.
03:02:12


SPARE ME THE HEARTS AND FLOWERS, SLIM.
THERE'S PLENTY MORE WHERE SHE CAME FROM, SHAW'LL SEE TO THAT.
WONDER HOW THE SENATOR'D FEEL TO LEARN THAT HIS BOSOM BUDDY...
...HAPPENS TO BE A MUTIE HIMSELF?
IN GOOD TIME, BONEBREAKER, PERHAPS WE SHALL INFORM HIM.
HOW CAN YOU BE CERTAIN, PIERCE, THAT THE X-MEN WERE INVOLVED?
THE ROBOT MAY HAVE BEEN CLEARLY VISIBLE ON OUR MONITORS.
THOSE HE FOUGHT WERE NOT.


TAKE MY WORD FOR IT, LADY DEATHSTRIKE, THOSE WERE INDEED THE X-MEN.
AN' DON'CHU WORRY NONE 'BOUT US FINDIN' 'EM, SWEETNESS--
-- 'CAUSE WE KNOW WHERE THEY LIVE!
INDEED WE DO. AND KNOWING THAT-- KNOWING AS WELL HOW THEY THINK AND FIGHT--
--TOGETHER WITH THE CAPABILITY OF TAKING THEM COMPLETELY BY SURPRISE-- WILL ENABLE US, MY FRIENDS...

...TO DESTROY THEM.
HE'S SCARY, NANNY.
HE IS DONALD PIERCE, PETER, THE HELLFIRE CLUB'S RENEGADE WHITE KING...
...AND YOU'D DO WELL, YOUNG MAN, TO WATCH YOUR STEP AROUND HIM.
POOR LITTLE MUTANTS. IN THE DEADLIEST OF DANGER.


WE GONNA HELP 'EM?
WHAT A BRIGHT AND GENEROUS BOY YOU ARE, PETER.
SOON, MY ORPHAN-MAKER, YOU'LL HAVE LOTS OF NEW FRIENDS TO PLAY WITH.
BECAUSE, WHETHER THEY LIKE IT OR NOT, WE ARE GOING TO SAVE THE X-MEN.
NEXT: THE CRADLE WILL FALL!

MARVEL
THE UNCANN
X-MEN
NOW ON SALE TWICE A MONTH!
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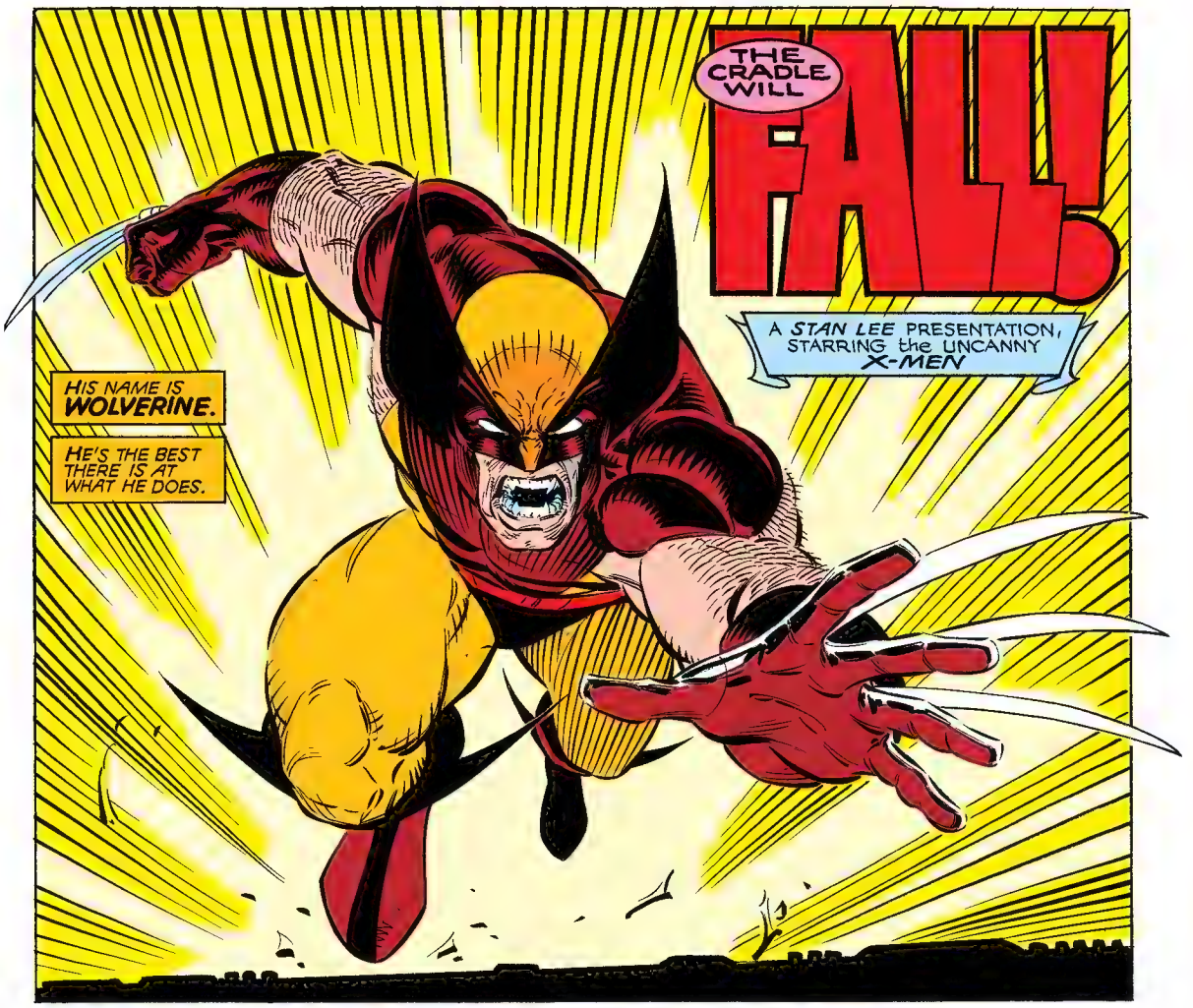
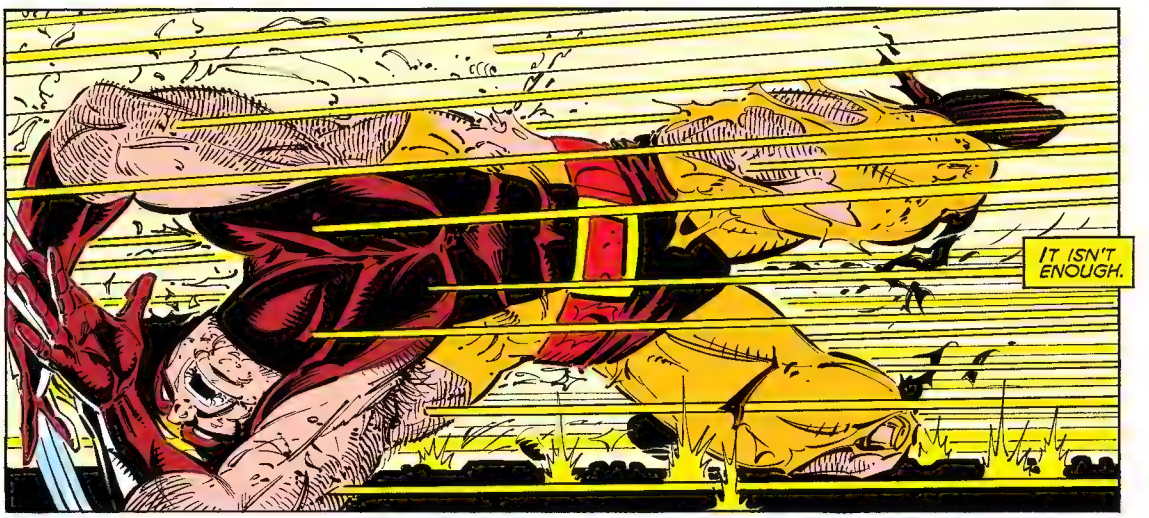
AUTHORITY
WHY, HAVOK? WHY DID YOU KILL STORM!?
LEE
DG


THE CRADLE WILL
FALL!
A STAN LEE PRESENTATION, STARRING the UNCANNY X-MEN
HIS NAME IS WOLVERINE.
HE'S THE BEST THERE IS AT WHAT HE DOES.



CHRIS CLAREMONT WRITER | JIM LEE PENCILER | DAN GREEN INKER | GLYNIS OLIVER, COLORIST TOM ORZECHOWSKI, LETTERER | BOB HARRAS EDITOR | TOM DeFALCO LORD HIGH EXECUTIONER

THE REAVERS

BONEBREAKER

HAWHWRR!

SURE DON'T MAKE 'EM LIKE THEY USED TO!

SKULLBUSTER

LET'S HOPE NOT, COMPADRE--

--SINCE *WE'RE* PRIME EXAMPLES OF THAT "WAY" THEY USED TO.

PRETTY BOY

WHAT DO YOU EXPECT, SKULL?

THAT'S JUST A ROBOT.

WE'RE *CYBORGS*.

HOWEVER, LADS AND LASSIE, LOATH AS I AM TO POOP OUR PARTY...

...I SUSPECT THE REAL THING WON'T BE SO EASY A KILL.

WOLVERINE'S BONES ARE LACED WITH *ADAMANTIUM*, THEY CAN'T BE BROKEN.

DONALD PIERCE

PERHAPS. BUT HE REMAINS *MORTAL* FLESH.

HE CAN BE HURT, HE BLEEDS.

AND ALSO HEALS.

AS MY MEN AND I, LORD PIERCE, LEARNED TO OUR COST.

LADY DEATHSTRIKE

WE ALL HAVE REASON TO *HATE* THE X-MEN, YURIKO--

--AND THIS *X-MAN* IN PARTICULAR--

--THAT IS WHY I BANDED US TOGETHER.

SO THAT, AS A WHOLE, WE MAY SUCCEED...

...WHERE, AS SEPARATE PARTS, WE FAILED.

AND BRING OUR ENEMIES TO THE FATEFUL, FATAL END...

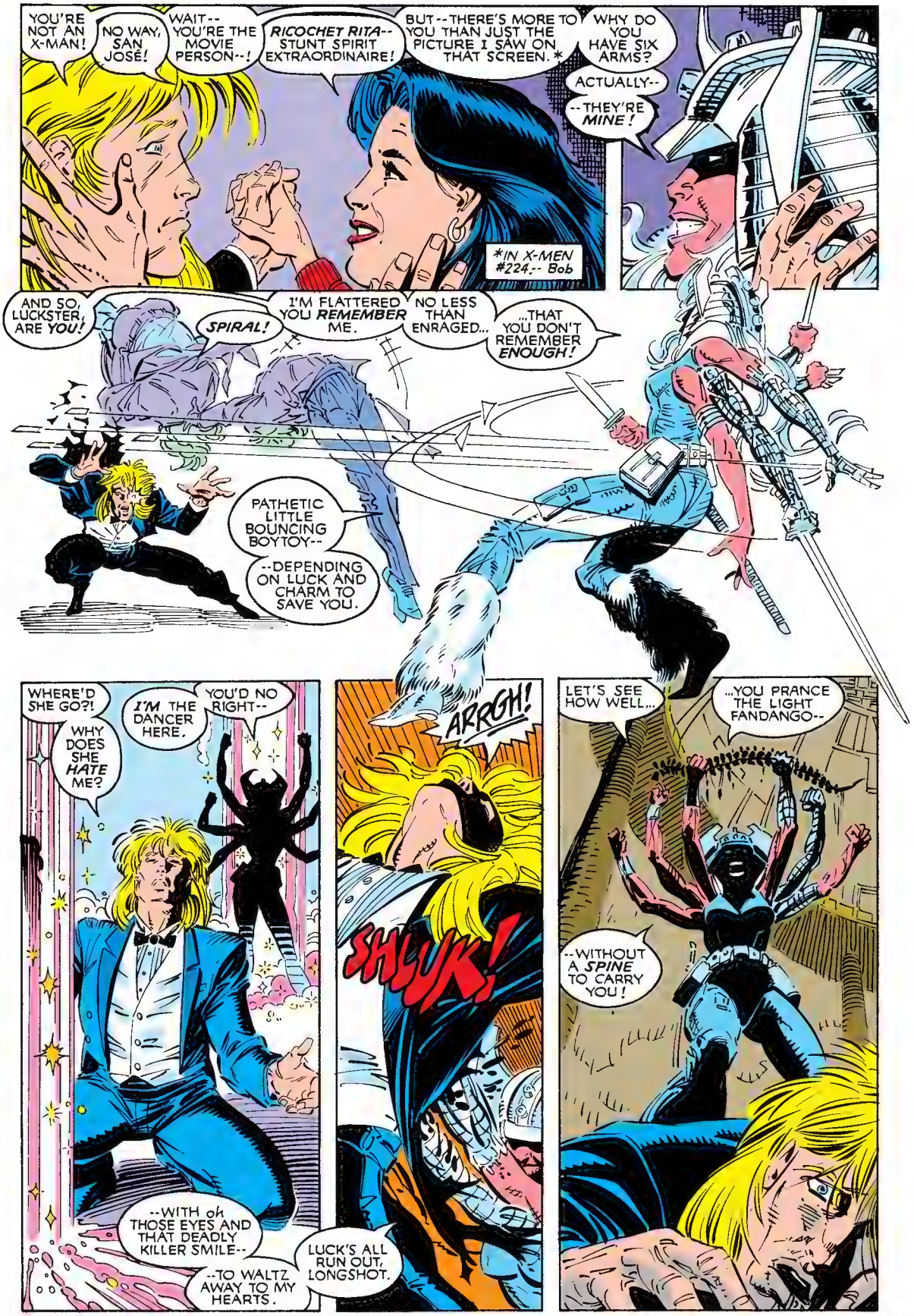
...THEY SO RICHLY DESERVE.

REESE

COLE

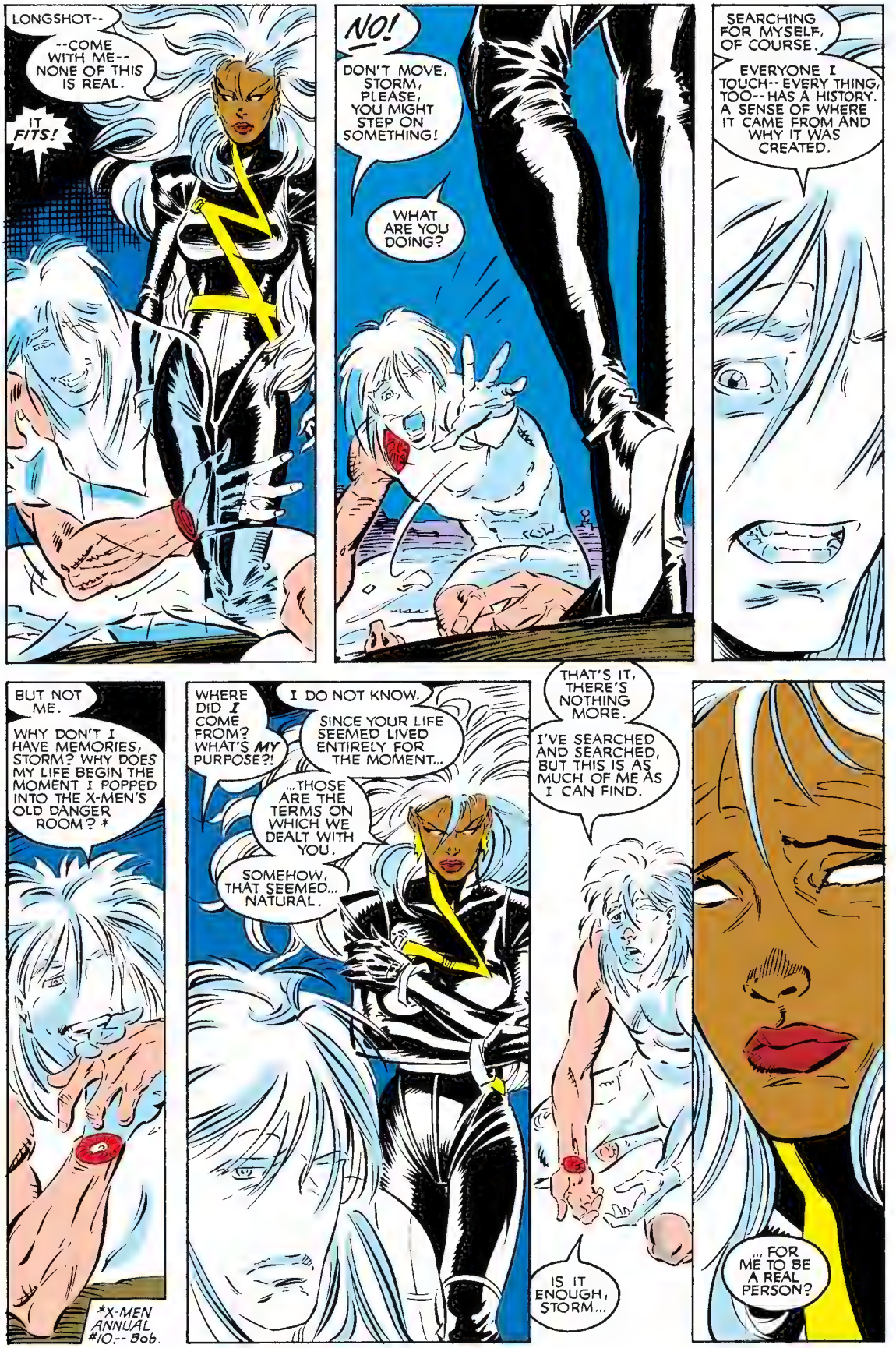
MACON

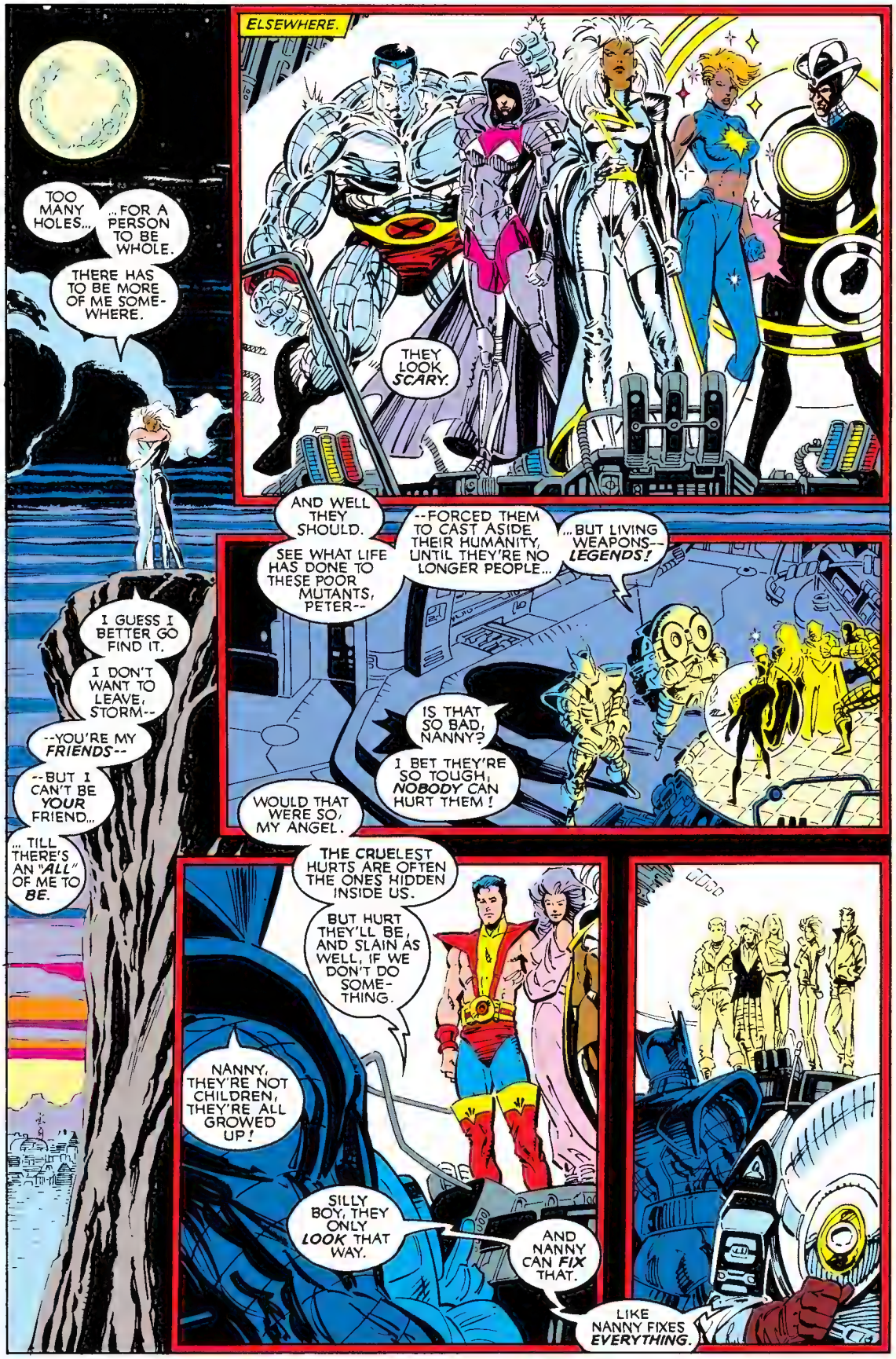
AUSTRALIA. SORT OF.
BUT IN REALITY...
...ONLY A DREAM.
HEY!
LIGHT--SO BLINDINGLY BRIGHT--
--DAZZLER! I DIDN'T KNOW YOU COULD FLY!
GET REAL, LONGSHOT!
THIS IS HOW A STAR MAKES HER ENTRANCE.
MY CLOTHES HAVE CHANGED!
GONNA DANCE WITH ME, CUTIE...
...GOTTA LOOK THE PROPER PART.
WHY ARE THE X-MEN PLAYING THE MUSIC?
WHY NOT?
SHALL WE?
TIME'S UP, LIGHTENGALE!
ROGUE!
Ukk!
NOW IT'S MY TURN!
I DON'T UNDER-STAND.
GO WITH THE FLOW, SUGAR.
AIN'T THAT WHAT YOU DO BEST?
GANGWAY!
AND THE CROWD GASPS WITH ASTONISH-MENT AND DELIGHT...
Gasp!
...AS THE STAR OF SCREENS SMALL AND LARGE--
--NOT TO MENTION COUNTLESS BACKYARD FANTASIES--
--MAKES HER LATEST CONQUEST!


YOU'RE NOT AN X-MAN!
NO WAY, SAN JOSÉ!
WAIT-- YOU'RE THE MOVIE PERSON--!
RICOCHET RITA-- STUNT SPIRIT EXTRAORDINAIRE!
BUT--THERE'S MORE TO YOU THAN JUST THE PICTURE I SAW ON THAT SCREEN.*
WHY DO YOU HAVE SIX ARMS?
ACTUALLY--
--THEY'RE MINE!
*IN X-MEN #224.-- Bob
AND SO, LUCKSTER, ARE YOU!
SPIRAL!
I'M FLATTERED YOU REMEMBER ME.
NO LESS THAN ENRAGED...
...THAT YOU DON'T REMEMBER ENOUGH!
PATHETIC LITTLE BOUNCING BOYTOY--
--DEPENDING ON LUCK AND CHARM TO SAVE YOU.
WHERE'D SHE GO?!
WHY DOES SHE HATE ME?
I'M THE DANCER HERE.
YOU'D NO RIGHT--
--WITH oh THOSE EYES AND THAT DEADLY KILLER SMILE--
--TO WALTZ AWAY TO MY HEARTS.
LUCK'S ALL RUN OUT, LONGSHOT.
ARRGH!
SHLUK!
LET'S SEE HOW WELL...
...YOU PRANCE THE LIGHT FANDANGO--
--WITHOUT A SPINE TO CARRY YOU!

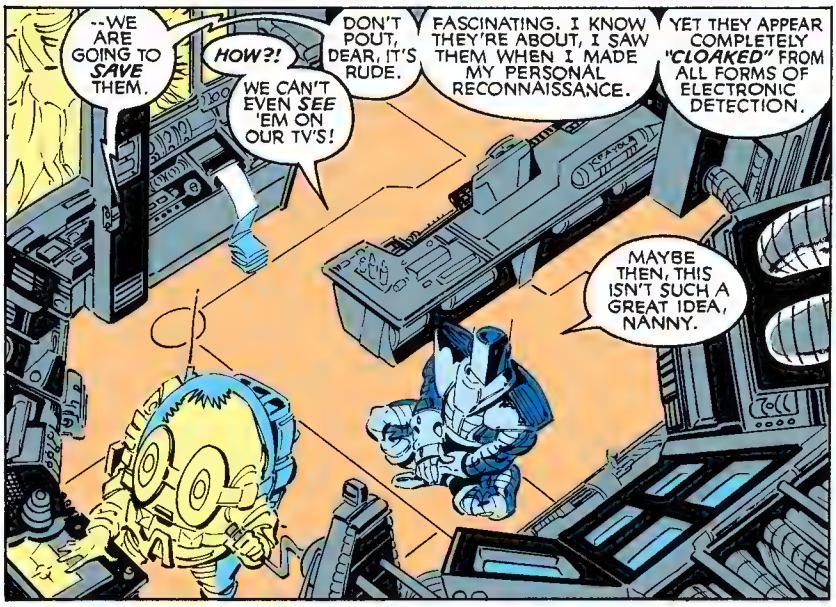
Heh.
WRETCHED ENCUMBRANCE.
Heh heh.
GLAD TO BE...
Hurrrm.
...RID OF IT.
SABLE SHARDS--
--NO!
SILLY SPIRAL--
--TWISTED SO TIGHT YOU FORGOT--
--FOR ALL THE DANCER'S ART...
...IT'S THE CHOREOGRAPHER WHO CALLS THE TUNE!
ZWIPPP!
UGKGH!
SHUHASHUK
SPINES ARE FOR BOOKS.
TOO EASILY BROKEN OR BURNED.
FLEXIBILITY'S THE ANSWER.
DON'T YOU AGREE?
NEVER FAILS.
SHOULD'VE KNOWN BETTER.
NO MATTER WHAT HAPPENS, LONGSHOT...
...YOU ALWAYS KILL...
...THE ONE...
...YOU LOVE
HOW CAN THAT BE, MY DEAD DECAYING DARLINGS?
HA HA HA HA HA HA HA HA HA
I'M STILL HERE!
HA HA HA HA HA HA HA HA HA

THAT LAUGHTER--
--SO FAINT IT'S ALMOST IMAGINATION--
--COLD AND CRUEL...
...BEYOND ALL COMPREHENSION.
WHERE AM I?
THE LAST I REMEMBER--
--I LAY DOWN ON MY BED.
SOMEHOW, I SENSE-- I KNOW-- I AM STILL THERE.
MY BODY, AT ANY RATE.
IS THIS YOUR DOING, GATEWAY-- IN THE MANNER OF YOUR ABORIGINAL PEOPLE--
--TO SUMMON MY SPIRIT INTO SOME DREAM?
FOR WHAT PURPOSE?!
IF YOU BROUGHT ME HERE, OLD MAN...
...AT LEAST DO ME THE COURTESY OF AN ANSWER!
WHAT ARE YOU LOOKING...
...AT?!?
MERCIFUL GODDESS!
HIYA, STORM!
CAN'T STOP NOW, REAL BUSY.
OBOYOBOY-- LOOK WHAT I FOUND! ISN'T IT GREAT!
NO DREAM-- THE FOULEST NIGHTMARE!
WHY ARE YOU TORMENTING THE BOY, GATEWAY--
--ANSWER ME!?!


LONGSHOT--
--COME WITH ME-- NONE OF THIS IS REAL.
IT FITS!
NO!
DON'T MOVE, STORM, PLEASE, YOU MIGHT STEP ON SOMETHING!
WHAT ARE YOU DOING?
SEARCHING FOR MYSELF, OF COURSE.
EVERYONE I TOUCH-- EVERY THING, TOO-- HAS A HISTORY. A SENSE OF WHERE IT CAME FROM AND WHY IT WAS CREATED.
BUT NOT ME.
WHY DON'T I HAVE MEMORIES, STORM? WHY DOES MY LIFE BEGIN THE MOMENT I POPPED INTO THE X-MEN'S OLD DANGER ROOM? *
*X-MEN ANNUAL #10.-- Bob.
WHERE DID I COME FROM? WHAT'S MY PURPOSE?!
I DO NOT KNOW.
SINCE YOUR LIFE SEEMED LIVED ENTIRELY FOR THE MOMENT...
...THOSE ARE THE TERMS ON WHICH WE DEALT WITH YOU.
SOMEHOW, THAT SEEMED... NATURAL.
THAT'S IT, THERE'S NOTHING MORE.
I'VE SEARCHED AND SEARCHED, BUT THIS IS AS MUCH OF ME AS I CAN FIND.
IS IT ENOUGH, STORM...
... FOR ME TO BE A REAL PERSON?

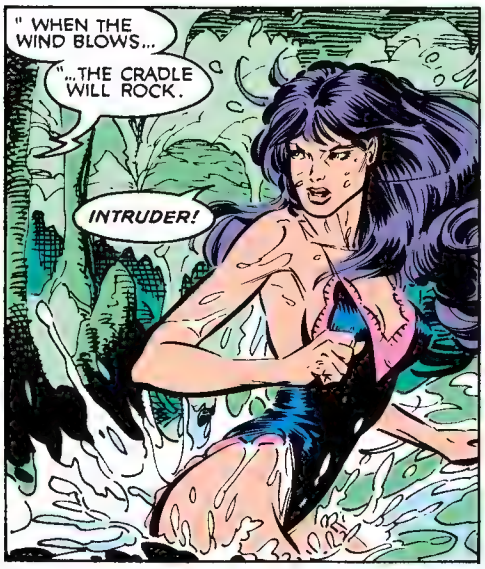

TOO MANY HOLES...
...FOR A PERSON TO BE WHOLE.
THERE HAS TO BE MORE OF ME SOMEWHERE.
I GUESS I BETTER GO FIND IT.
I DON'T WANT TO LEAVE, STORM--
--YOU'RE MY FRIENDS--
--BUT I CAN'T BE YOUR FRIEND...
...TILL THERE'S AN "ALL" OF ME TO BE.
ELSEWHERE.
THEY LOOK SCARY.
AND WELL THEY SHOULD.
SEE WHAT LIFE HAS DONE TO THESE POOR MUTANTS, PETER--
--FORCED THEM TO CAST ASIDE THEIR HUMANITY, UNTIL THEY'RE NO LONGER PEOPLE...
...BUT LIVING WEAPONS--LEGENDS!
IS THAT SO BAD, NANNY?
I BET THEY'RE SO TOUGH, NOBODY CAN HURT THEM!
WOULD THAT WERE SO, MY ANGEL.
THE CRUELEST HURTS ARE OFTEN THE ONES HIDDEN INSIDE US.
BUT HURT THEY'LL BE, AND SLAIN AS WELL, IF WE DON'T DO SOMETHING.
NANNY, THEY'RE NOT CHILDREN, THEY'RE ALL GROWED UP!
SILLY BOY, THEY ONLY LOOK THAT WAY.
AND NANNY CAN FIX THAT.
LIKE NANNY FIXES EVERYTHING.

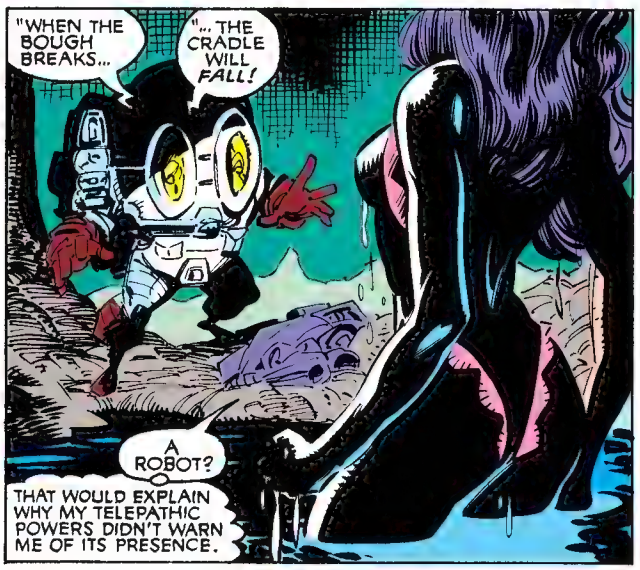
"THE X-MEN ARE IN DEADLY DANGER...
"... AND WHETHER THEY WANT US TO OR NOT--

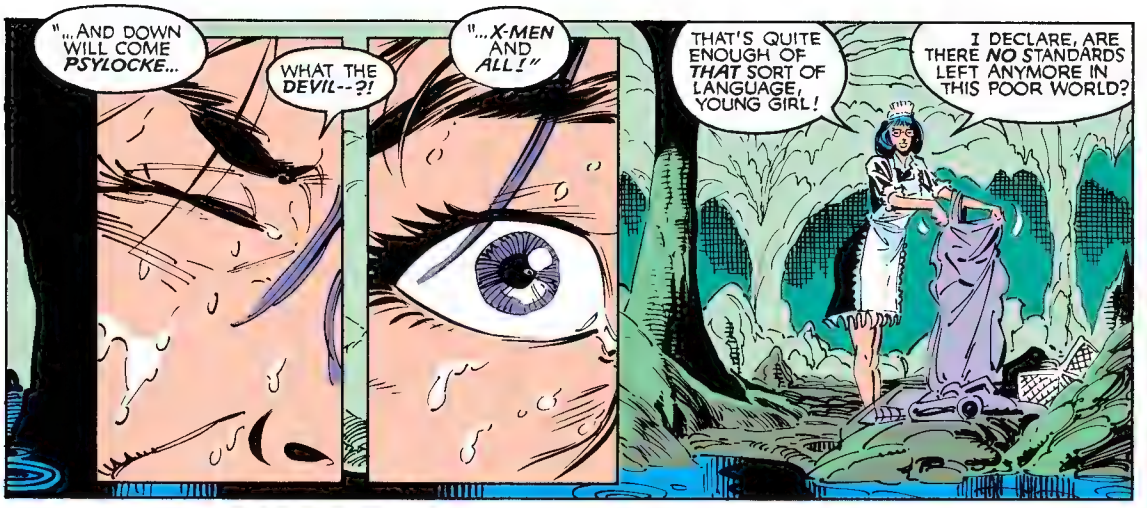

--WE ARE GOING TO SAVE THEM.
HOW?!
WE CAN'T EVEN SEE 'EM ON OUR TV'S!
DON'T POUT, DEAR, IT'S RUDE.
FASCINATING. I KNOW THEY'RE ABOUT, I SAW THEM WHEN I MADE MY PERSONAL RECONNAISSANCE.
YET THEY APPEAR COMPLETELY "CLOAKED" FROM ALL FORMS OF ELECTRONIC DETECTION.
MAYBE THEN, THIS ISN'T SUCH A GREAT IDEA, NANNY.

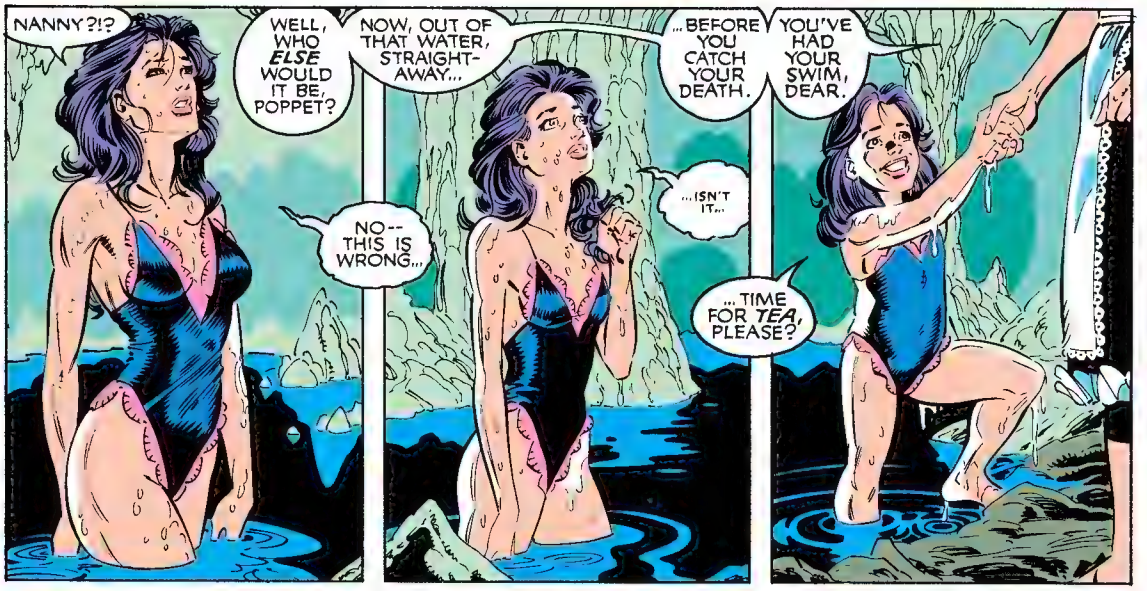
Oh, YE OF LITTLE FAITH.
CHALLENGES ARE SET BEFORE US, DEAR HEART...

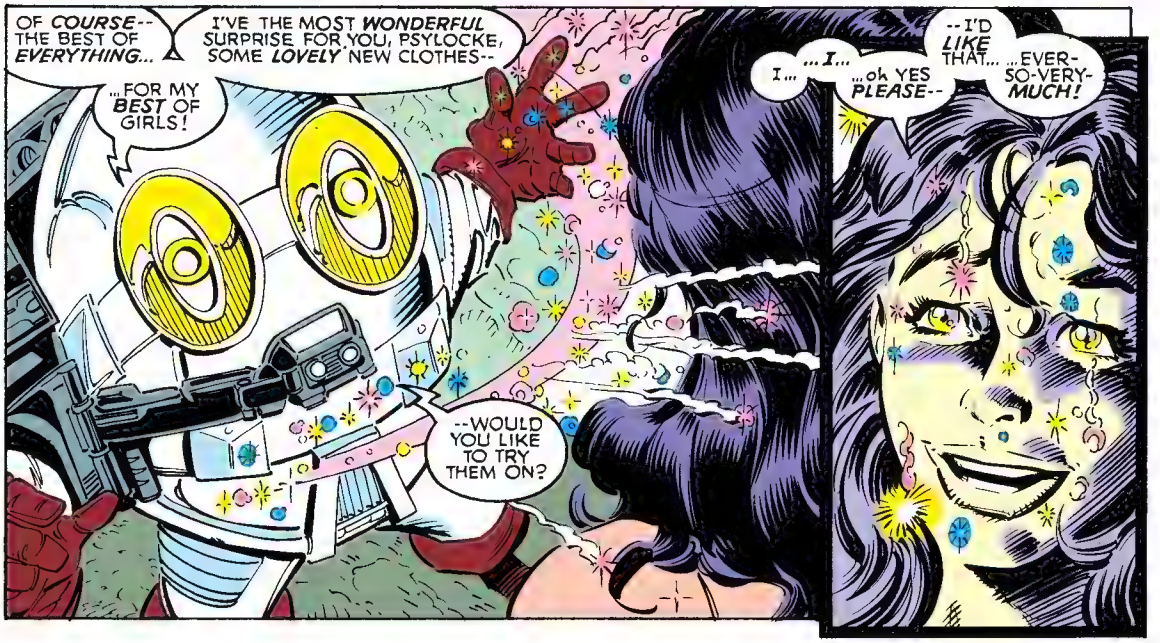
"... THAT WE MAY RISE ABOVE THEM."
"ROCK-A-BYE BABY...
"... IN THE TREE-TOP.

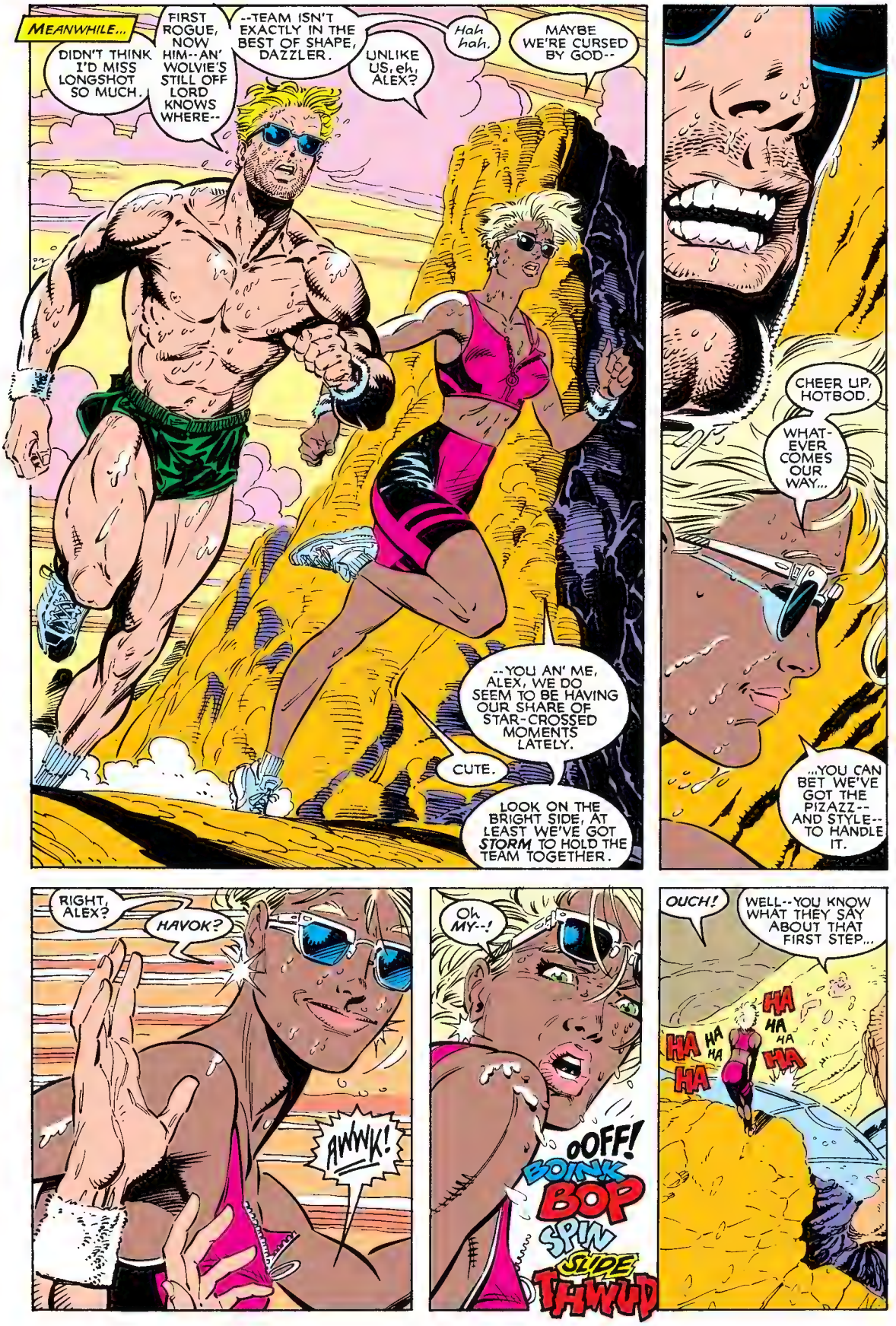

" WHEN THE WIND BLOWS...
"...THE CRADLE WILL ROCK.
INTRUDER!

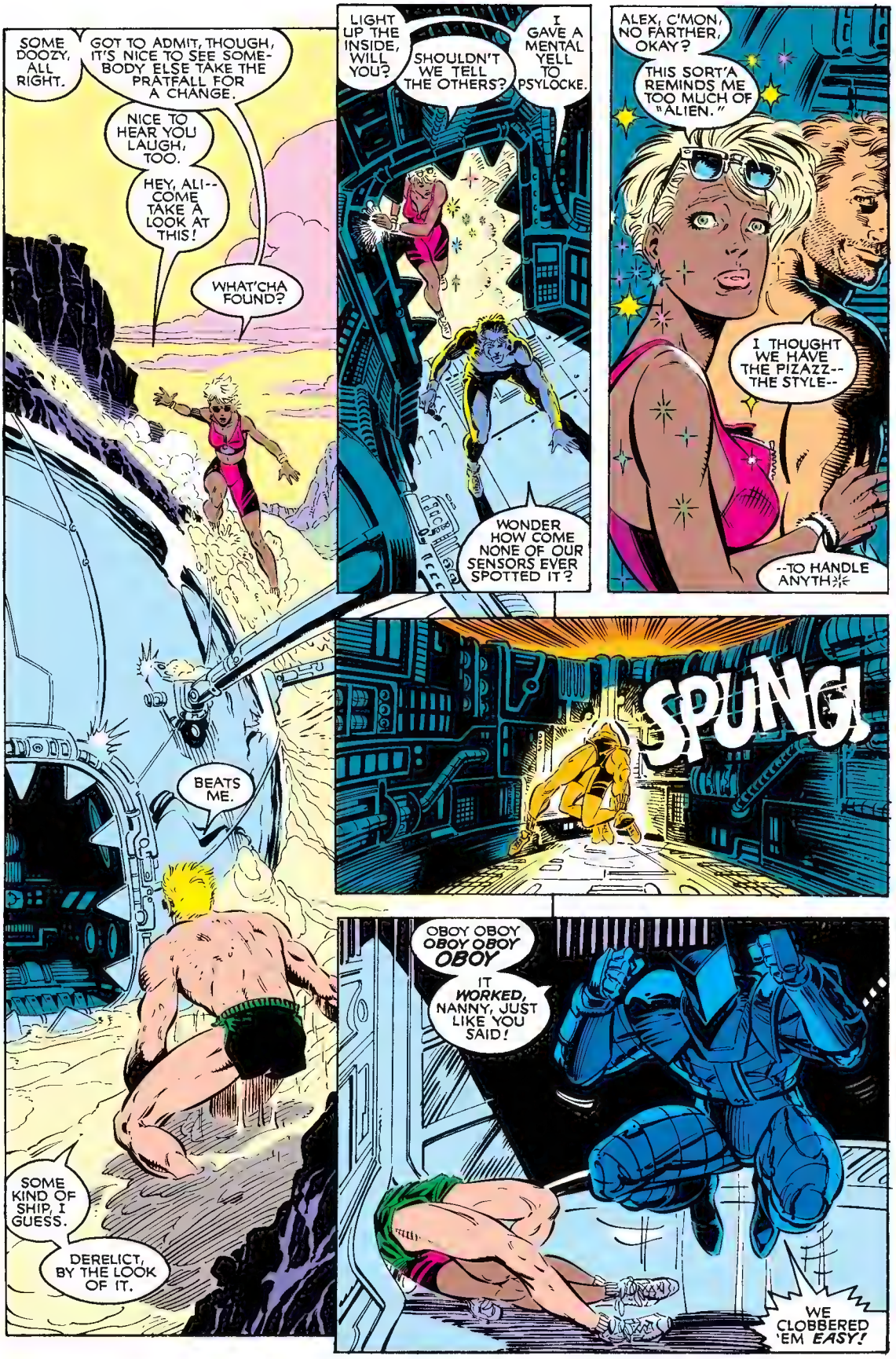

"WHEN THE BOUGH BREAKS...
"... THE CRADLE WILL FALL!
A ROBOT?
THAT WOULD EXPLAIN WHY MY TELEPATHIC POWERS DIDN'T WARN ME OF ITS PRESENCE.

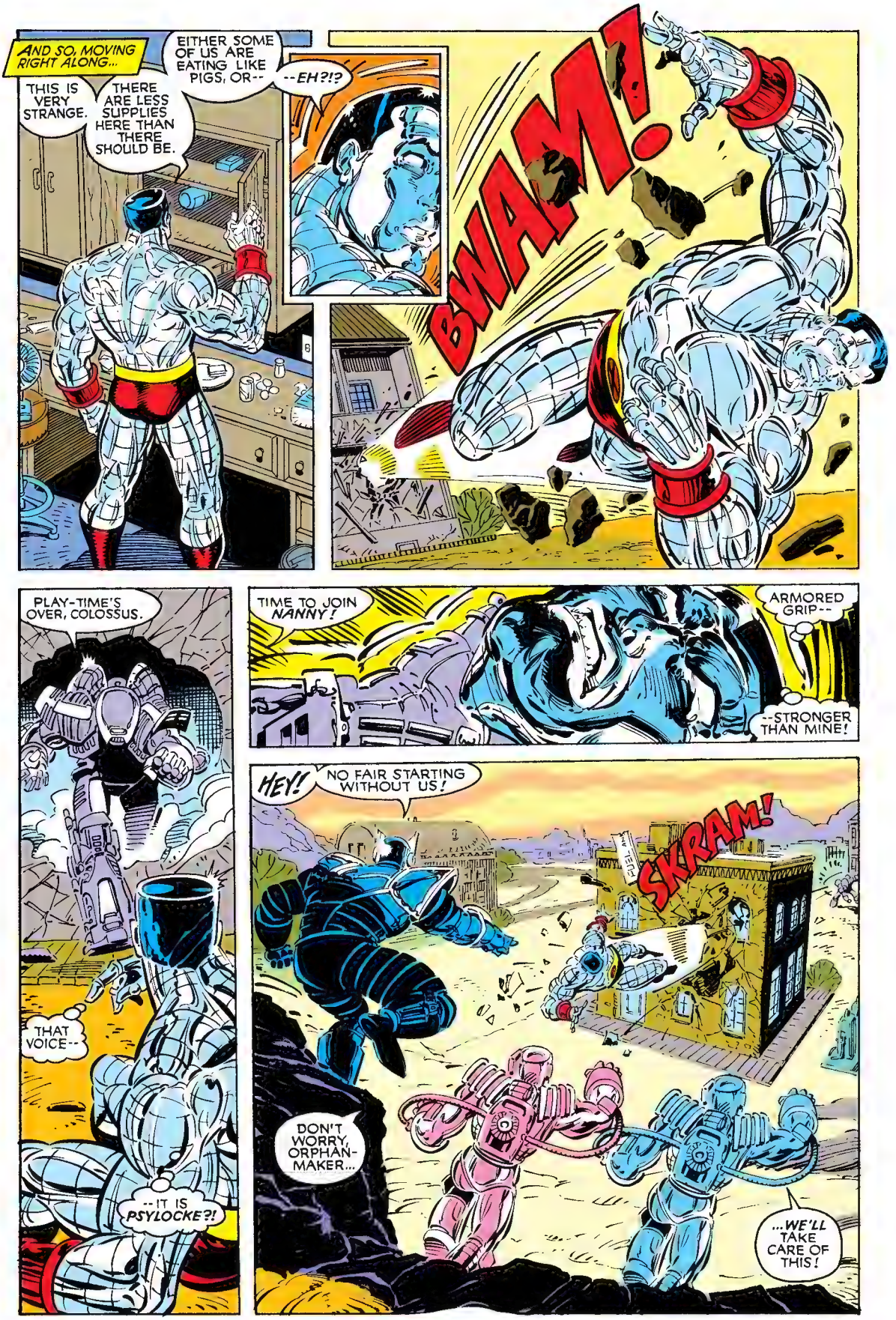

"...AND DOWN WILL COME PSYLOCKE...
WHAT THE DEVIL--?!
"...X-MEN AND ALL!"
THAT'S QUITE ENOUGH OF THAT SORT OF LANGUAGE, YOUNG GIRL!
I DECLARE, ARE THERE NO STANDARDS LEFT ANYMORE IN THIS POOR WORLD?

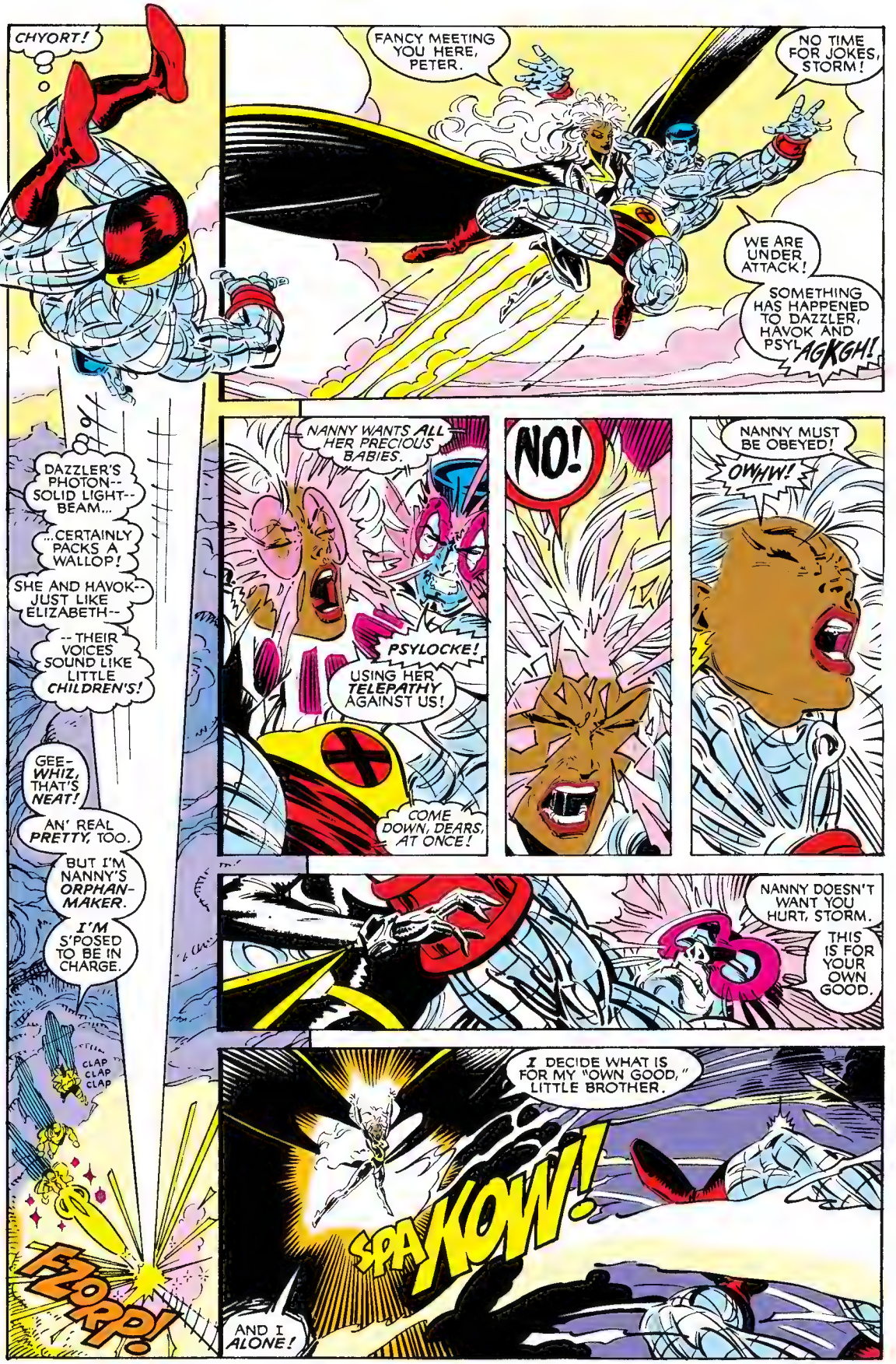

NANNY?!?
WELL, WHO ELSE WOULD IT BE, POPPET?
NOW, OUT OF THAT WATER, STRAIGHT-AWAY...
NO-- THIS IS WRONG...
...BEFORE YOU CATCH YOUR DEATH.
YOU'VE HAD YOUR SWIM, DEAR.
...ISN'T IT...
...TIME FOR TEA, PLEASE?

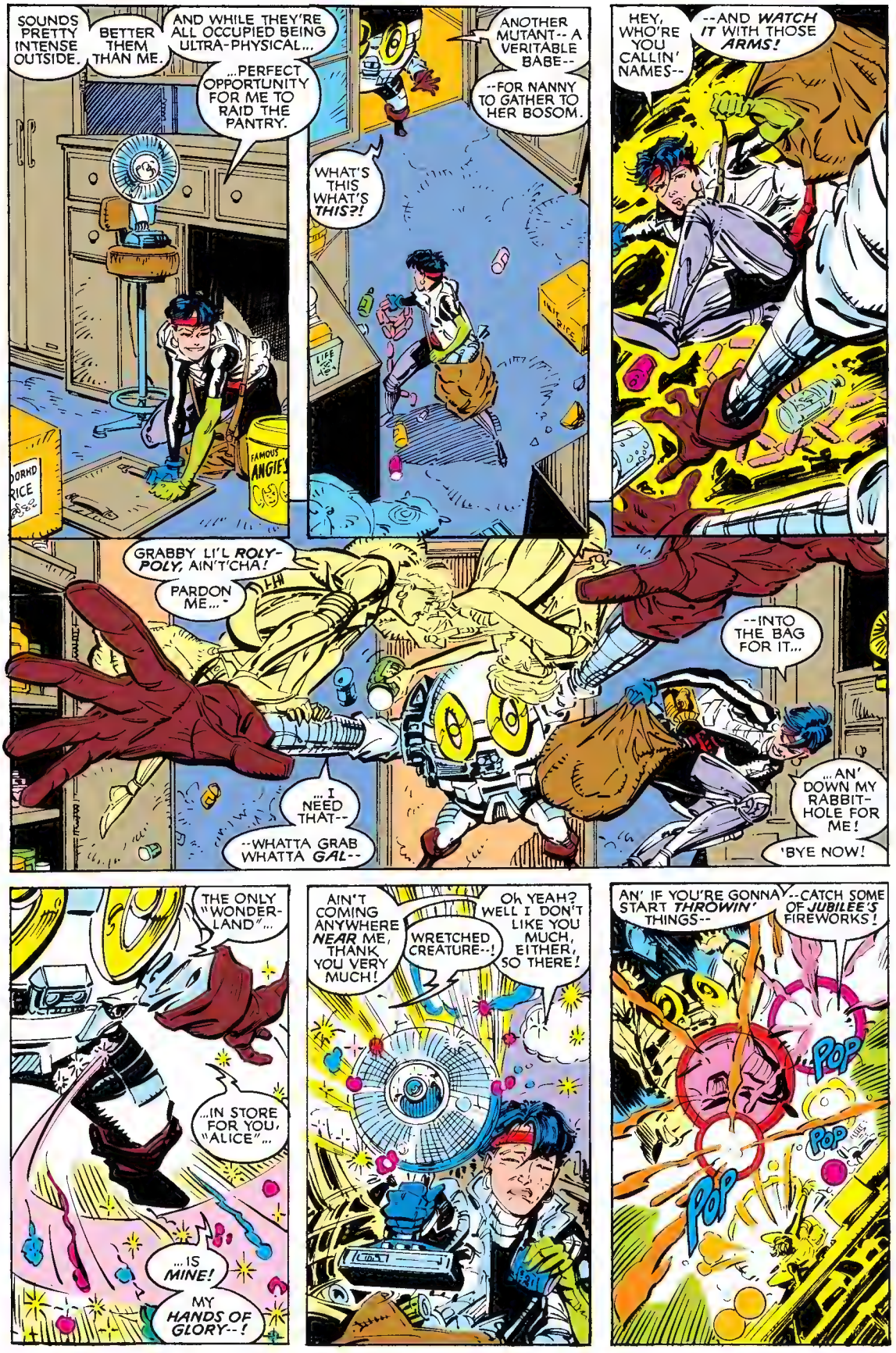

OF COURSE-- THE BEST OF EVERYTHING...
I'VE THE MOST WONDERFUL SURPRISE FOR YOU, PSYLOCKE, SOME LOVELY NEW CLOTHES--
...FOR MY BEST OF GIRLS!
--WOULD YOU LIKE TO TRY THEM ON?
I...
...I...
...oh YES PLEASE--
--I'D LIKE THAT...
...EVER-SO-VERY-MUCH!

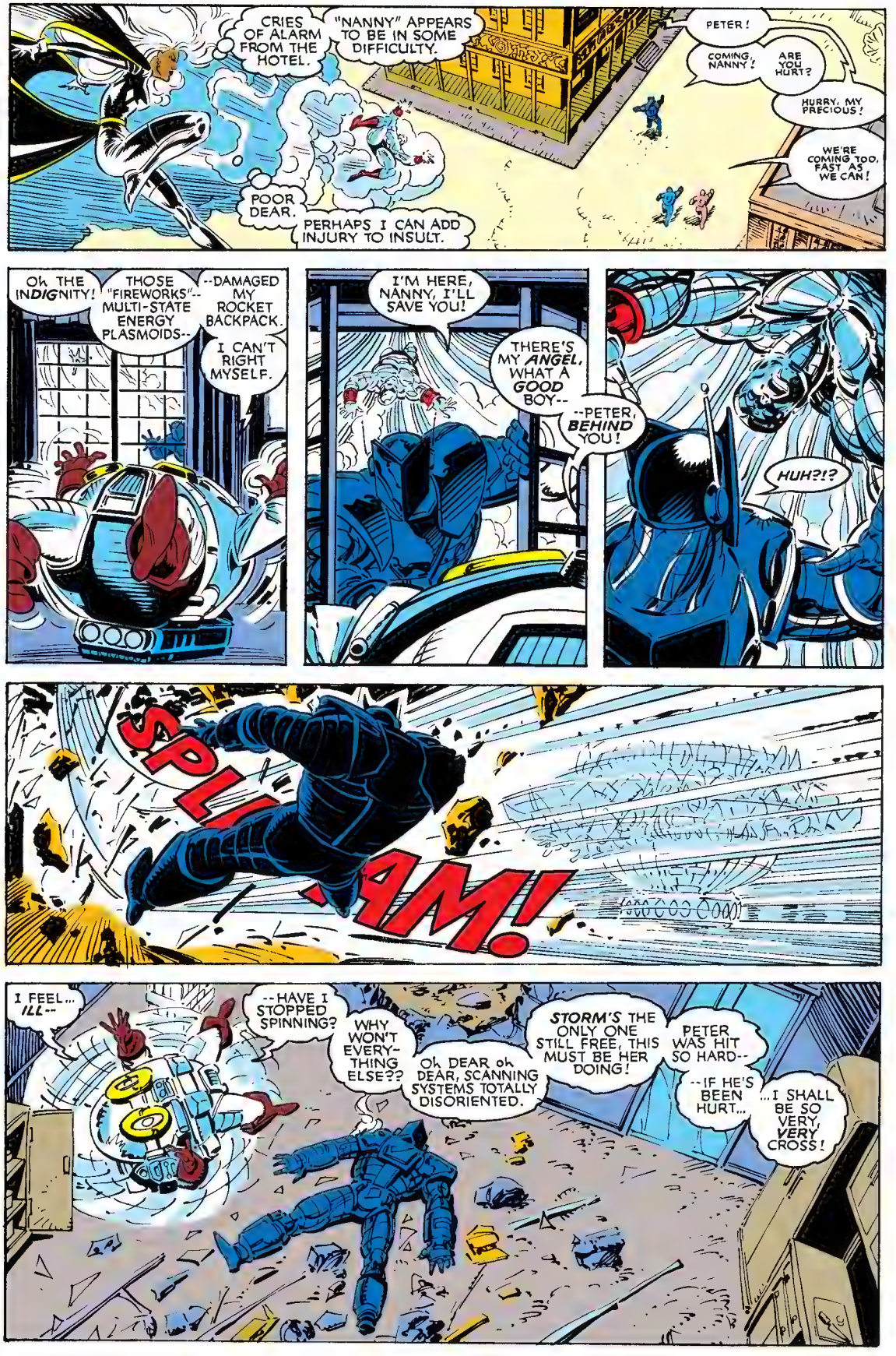

MEANWHILE...
DIDN'T THINK I'D MISS LONGSHOT SO MUCH.
FIRST ROGUE, NOW HIM--AN' WOLVIE'S STILL OFF LORD KNOWS WHERE--
--TEAM ISN'T EXACTLY IN THE BEST OF SHAPE, DAZZLER.
UNLIKE US, eh, ALEX?
Hah hah.
MAYBE WE'RE CURSED BY GOD--
--YOU AN' ME, ALEX, WE DO SEEM TO BE HAVING OUR SHARE OF STAR-CROSSED MOMENTS LATELY.
CUTE.
LOOK ON THE BRIGHT SIDE, AT LEAST WE'VE GOT STORM TO HOLD THE TEAM TOGETHER.
CHEER UP, HOTBOD.
WHAT-EVER COMES OUR WAY...
...YOU CAN BET WE'VE GOT THE PIZAZZ--AND STYLE--TO HANDLE IT.
RIGHT, ALEX?
HAVOK?
AWWK!
Oh MY--!
oOFF!
BOINK
BOP
SPIN
SIDE
THWUD
OUCH!
WELL--YOU KNOW WHAT THEY SAY ABOUT THAT FIRST STEP...
HA HA HA
HA HA HA
HA

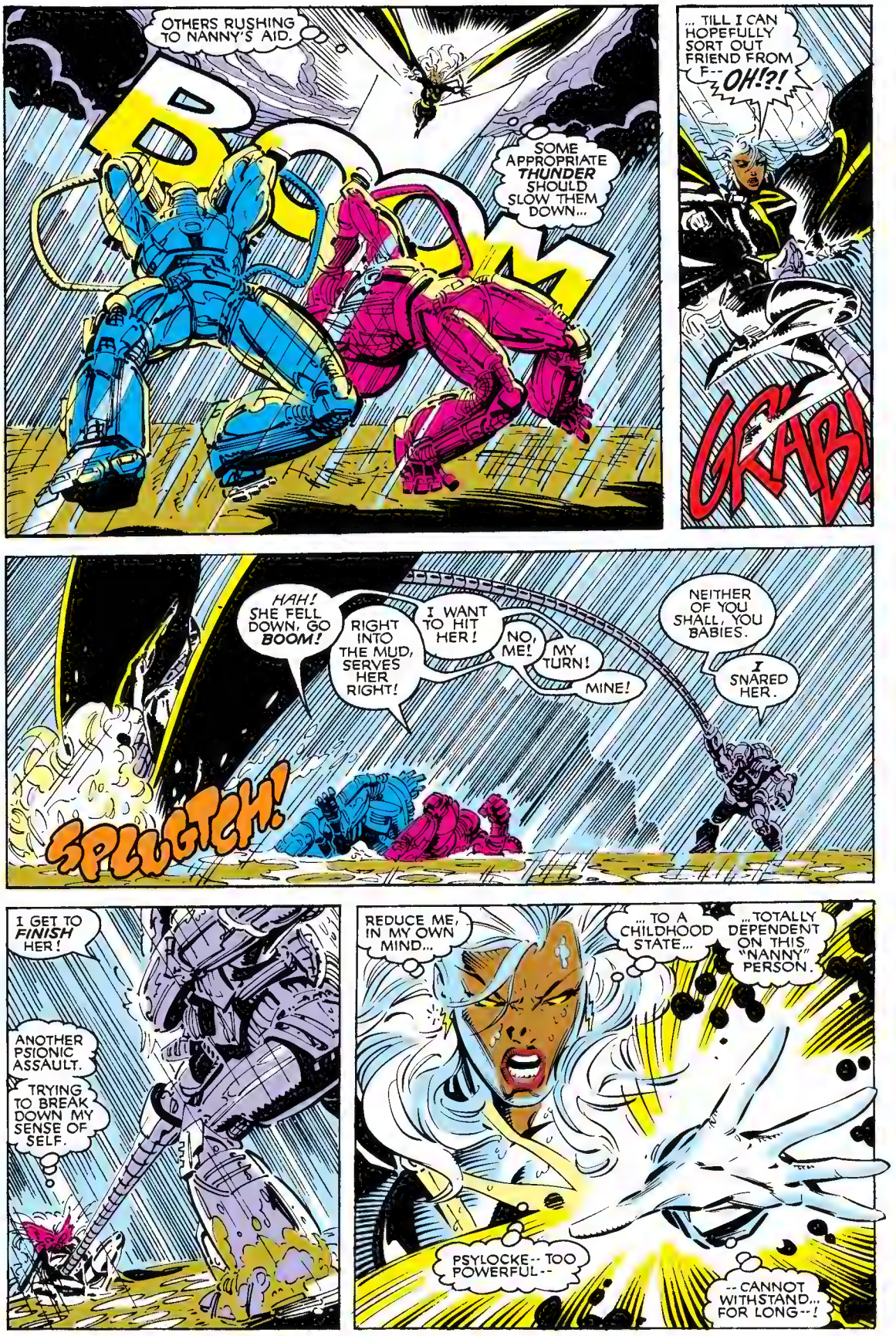

SOME DOOZY, ALL RIGHT.
GOT TO ADMIT, THOUGH, IT'S NICE TO SEE SOMEBODY ELSE TAKE THE PRATFALL FOR A CHANGE.
NICE TO HEAR YOU LAUGH, TOO.
HEY, ALI--COME TAKE A LOOK AT THIS!
WHAT'CHA FOUND?
BEATS ME.
SOME KIND OF SHIP, I GUESS.
DERELICT, BY THE LOOK OF IT.
LIGHT UP THE INSIDE, WILL YOU?
SHOULDN'T WE TELL THE OTHERS?
I GAVE A MENTAL YELL TO PSYLOCKE.
WONDER HOW COME NONE OF OUR SENSORS EVER SPOTTED IT?
ALEX, C'MON, NO FARTHER, OKAY?
THIS SORT'A REMINDS ME TOO MUCH OF "ALIEN."
I THOUGHT WE HAVE THE PIZAZZ--THE STYLE--
--TO HANDLE ANYTH
SPUNG!
OBOY OBOY OBOY OBOY
IT WORKED, NANNY, JUST LIKE YOU SAID!
WE CLOBBERED 'EM EASY!


AND SO, MOVING RIGHT ALONG...
THIS IS VERY STRANGE.
THERE ARE LESS SUPPLIES HERE THAN THERE SHOULD BE.
EITHER SOME OF US ARE EATING LIKE PIGS, OR--
--EH?!?
BWAM!
PLAY-TIME'S OVER, COLOSSUS.
THAT VOICE--
--IT IS PSYLOCKE?!
TIME TO JOIN NANNY!
ARMORED GRIP--
--STRONGER THAN MINE!
HEY!
NO FAIR STARTING WITHOUT US!
SKRAM!
DON'T WORRY, ORPHAN-MAKER...
...WE'LL TAKE CARE OF THIS!

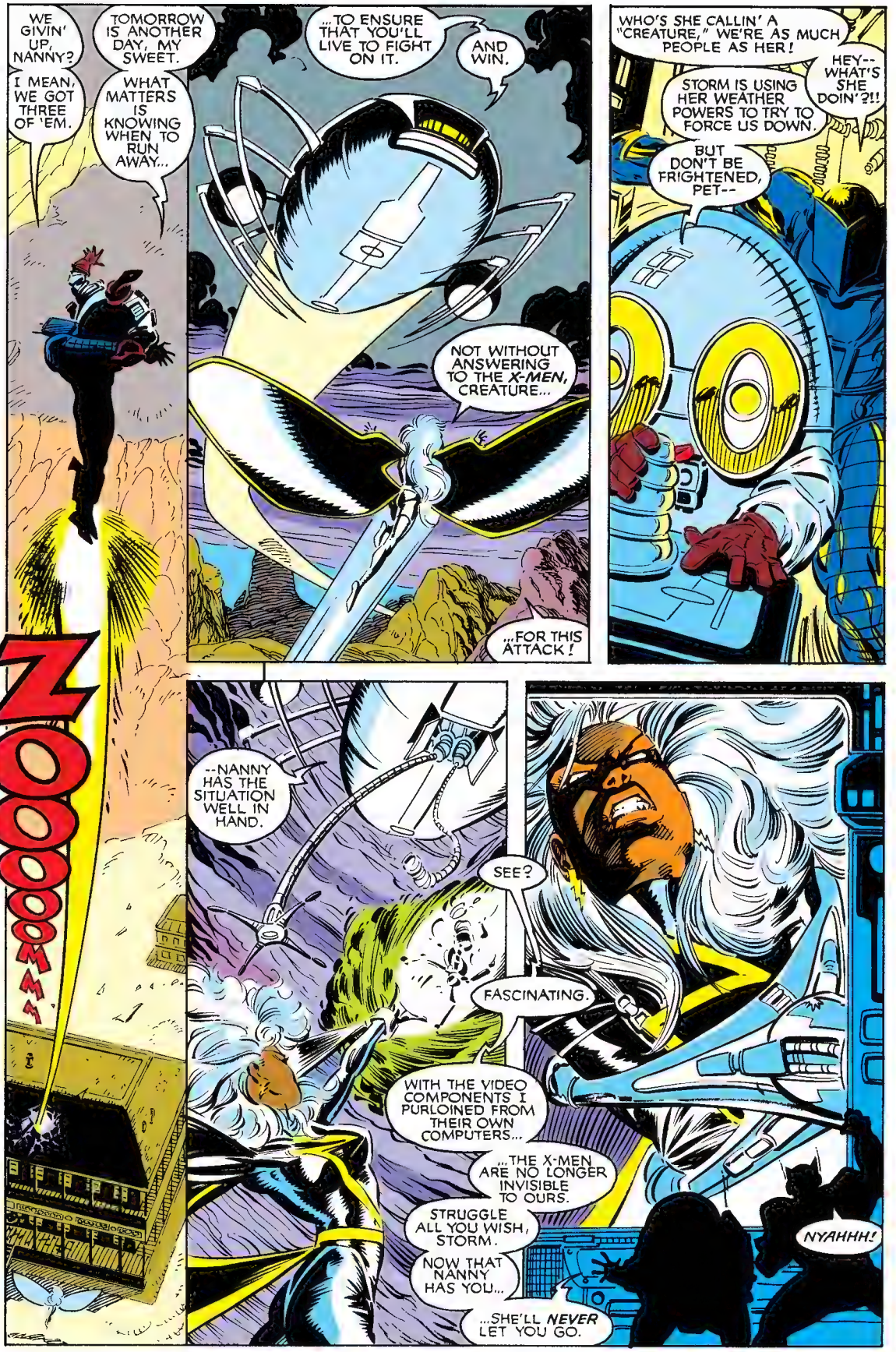

CHYORT!
FANCY MEETING YOU HERE, PETER.
NO TIME FOR JOKES, STORM!
WE ARE UNDER ATTACK!
SOMETHING HAS HAPPENED TO DAZZLER, HAVOK AND PSYLAGKGH!
DAZZLER'S PHOTON-- SOLID LIGHT-- BEAM...
...CERTAINLY PACKS A WALLOP!
SHE AND HAVOK-- JUST LIKE ELIZABETH--
-- THEIR VOICES SOUND LIKE LITTLE CHILDREN'S!
GEE-WHIZ, THAT'S NEAT!
AN' REAL PRETTY, TOO.
BUT I'M NANNY'S ORPHAN-MAKER.
I'M S'POSED TO BE IN CHARGE.
CLAP CLAP CLAP
FZORP!
NANNY WANTS ALL HER PRECIOUS BABIES.
PSYLOCKE!
USING HER TELEPATHY AGAINST US!
COME DOWN, DEARS, AT ONCE!
NO!
NANNY MUST BE OBEYED!
OWHW!
NANNY DOESN'T WANT YOU HURT, STORM.
THIS IS FOR YOUR OWN GOOD.
I DECIDE WHAT IS FOR MY "OWN GOOD," LITTLE BROTHER.
SPAKOW!
AND I ALONE!

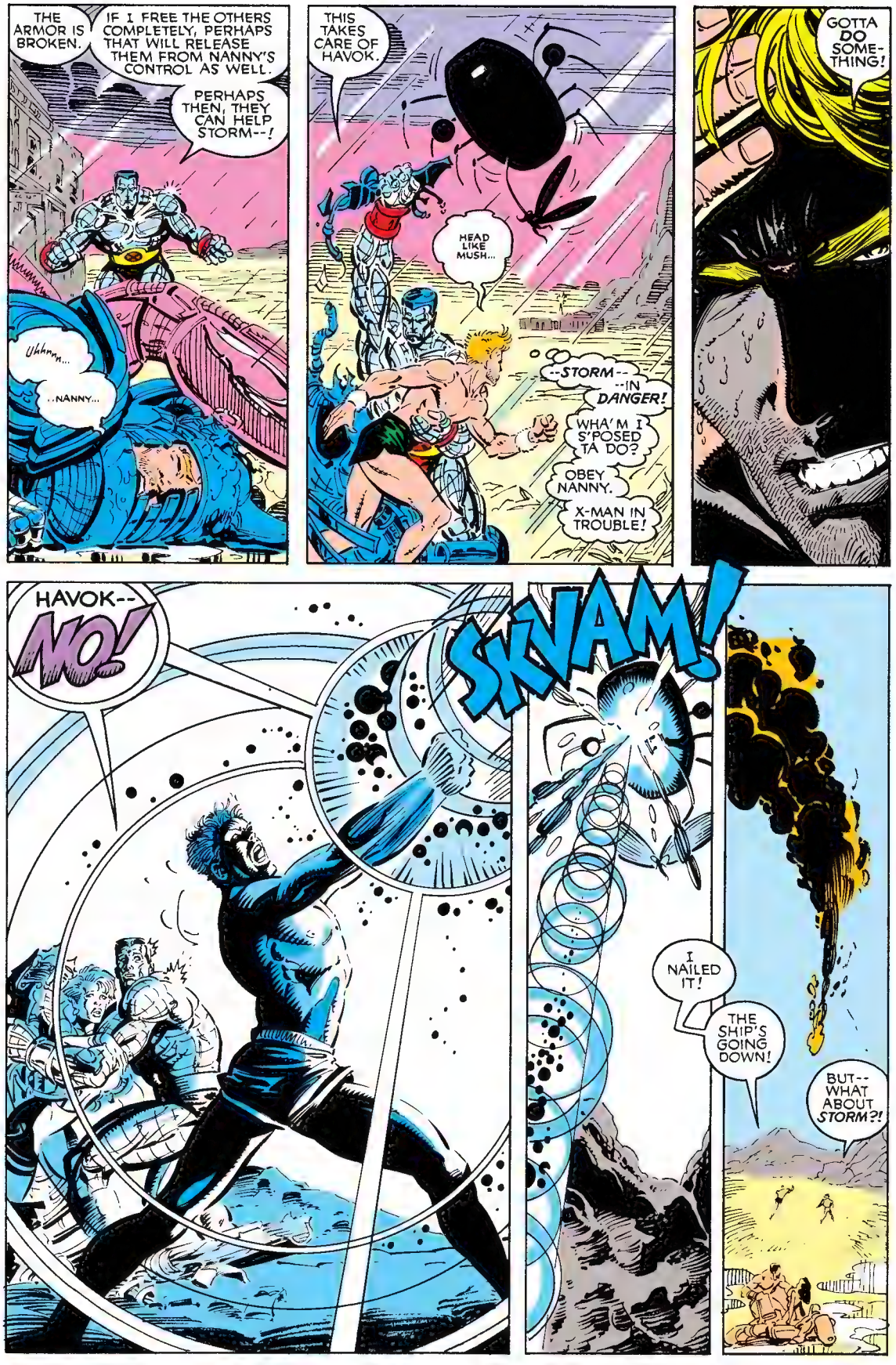

SOUNDS PRETTY INTENSE OUTSIDE.
BETTER THEM THAN ME.
AND WHILE THEY'RE ALL OCCUPIED BEING ULTRA-PHYSICAL...
...PERFECT OPPORTUNITY FOR ME TO RAID THE PANTRY.
FAMOUS ANGIE'S
ANOTHER MUTANT-- A VERITABLE BABE--
--FOR NANNY TO GATHER TO HER BOSOM.
WHAT'S THIS WHAT'S THIS?!
HEY, WHO'RE YOU CALLIN' NAMES--
--AND WATCH IT WITH THOSE ARMS!
GRABBY LI'L ROLY-POLY, AIN'T'CHA!
PARDON ME...
--INTO THE BAG FOR IT...
...I NEED THAT--
--WHATTA GRAB WHATTA GAL--
...AN' DOWN MY RABBIT-HOLE FOR ME!
'BYE NOW!
THE ONLY "WONDER-LAND"...
...IN STORE FOR YOU, "ALICE"...
...IS MINE!
MY HANDS OF GLORY--!
AIN'T COMING ANYWHERE NEAR ME, THANK YOU VERY MUCH!
WRETCHED CREATURE--!
Oh YEAH? WELL I DON'T LIKE YOU MUCH, EITHER, SO THERE!
AN' IF YOU'RE GONNA START THROWIN' THINGS--
--CATCH SOME OF JUBILEE'S FIREWORKS!
POP
POP
POP

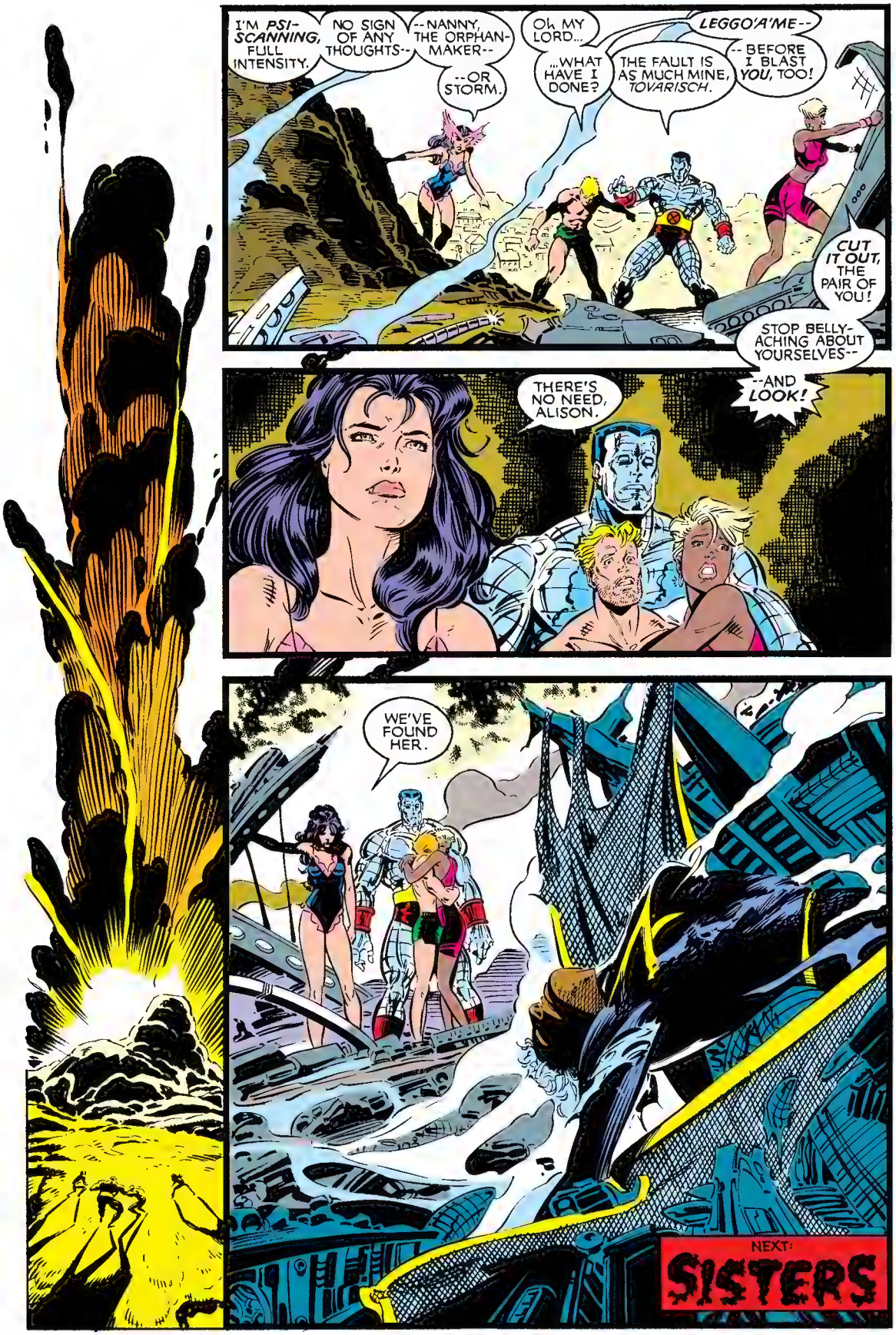

CRIES OF ALARM FROM THE HOTEL.
"NANNY" APPEARS TO BE IN SOME DIFFICULTY.
POOR DEAR.
PERHAPS I CAN ADD INJURY TO INSULT.
PETER!
COMING, NANNY!
ARE YOU HURT?
HURRY, MY PRECIOUS!
WE'RE COMING TOO, FAST AS WE CAN!
OH THE INDIGNITY!
THOSE "FIREWORKS"-- MULTI-STATE ENERGY PLASMOIDS--
--DAMAGED MY ROCKET BACKPACK.
I CAN'T RIGHT MYSELF.
I'M HERE, NANNY, I'LL SAVE YOU!
THERE'S MY ANGEL, WHAT A GOOD BOY--
--PETER, BEHIND YOU!
HUH?!?
SPLAM!
I FEEL... ILL--
--HAVE I STOPPED SPINNING?
WHY WON'T EVERY-THING ELSE??
OH DEAR OH DEAR, SCANNING SYSTEMS TOTALLY DISORIENTED.
STORM'S THE ONLY ONE STILL FREE, THIS MUST BE HER DOING!
PETER WAS HIT SO HARD--
--IF HE'S BEEN HURT...
...I SHALL BE SO VERY, VERY CROSS!

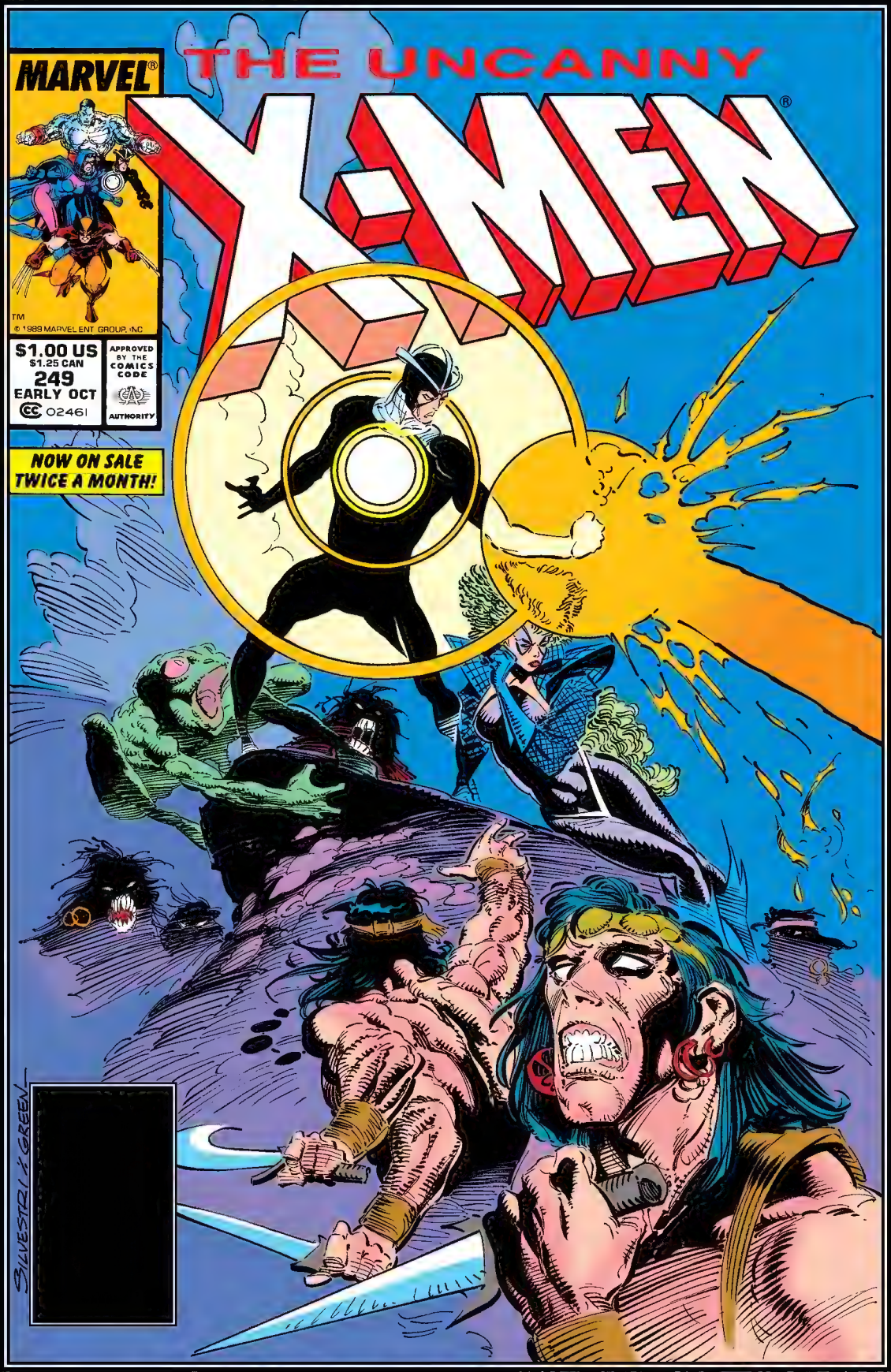

OTHERS RUSHING TO NANNY'S AID.
SOME APPROPRIATE THUNDER SHOULD SLOW THEM DOWN...
BOOM
... TILL I CAN HOPEFULLY SORT OUT FRIEND FROM F--
OH!?!
GRAB!
HAH! SHE FELL DOWN, GO BOOM!
RIGHT INTO THE MUD, SERVES HER RIGHT!
I WANT TO HIT HER!
NO, ME!
MY TURN!
MINE!
NEITHER OF YOU SHALL, YOU BABIES.
I SNARED HER.
SPLUTCH!
I GET TO FINISH HER!
ANOTHER PSIONIC ASSAULT.
TRYING TO BREAK DOWN MY SENSE OF SELF.
REDUCE ME, IN MY OWN MIND...
... TO A CHILDHOOD STATE...
...TOTALLY DEPENDENT ON THIS "NANNY" PERSON.
PSYLOCKE-- TOO POWERFUL--
--CANNOT WITHSTAND... FOR LONG--!

WHAT'S HAPPENING?!
STORM'S MAKING IT SO COLD, STUPID BOY--
--RAIN ON THE GROUND...
...IS TURNING TO ICE!
SHE'S WHISTLED UP A WIND, TOO!
CAN'T STOP MYSELF!
GANG-WAY!
HELP HELP HELP HELP
CRASH!
SO MUCH FOR THESE ARMORED WARRIORS,
STILL LEAVES THE ONE THEY CALLED "ORPHAN-MAKER."
VAM VAM VAM VAM
PUNT!
THAT NOISE--!
PETER, TO MY SIDE-- HURRY!
NANNY!
GET AWAY FROM HER, YOU METAL MEANIE!
YOU ARE ONE TO TALK, COMRADE.
FLY AWAY, PETER--
-- FLY US AWAY HOME!


WE GIVIN' UP, NANNY?
I MEAN, WE GOT THREE OF 'EM.
TOMORROW IS ANOTHER DAY, MY SWEET.
WHAT MATTERS IS KNOWING WHEN TO RUN AWAY...
...TO ENSURE THAT YOU'LL LIVE TO FIGHT ON IT.
AND WIN.
NOT WITHOUT ANSWERING TO THE X-MEN, CREATURE...
...FOR THIS ATTACK!
WHO'S SHE CALLIN' A "CREATURE," WE'RE AS MUCH PEOPLE AS HER!
HEY-- WHAT'S SHE DOIN'?!!
STORM IS USING HER WEATHER POWERS TO TRY TO FORCE US DOWN.
BUT DON'T BE FRIGHTENED, PET--
NOOOOOM!
--NANNY HAS THE SITUATION WELL IN HAND.
SEE?
FASCINATING.
WITH THE VIDEO COMPONENTS I PURLOINED FROM THEIR OWN COMPUTERS...
...THE X-MEN ARE NO LONGER INVISIBLE TO OURS.
STRUGGLE ALL YOU WISH, STORM.
NOW THAT NANNY HAS YOU...
...SHE'LL NEVER LET YOU GO.
NYAHHH!


THE ARMOR IS BROKEN.
IF I FREE THE OTHERS COMPLETELY, PERHAPS THAT WILL RELEASE THEM FROM NANNY'S CONTROL AS WELL.
PERHAPS THEN, THEY CAN HELP STORM--!
Uhhmmm...
..NANNY...
THIS TAKES CARE OF HAVOK.
HEAD LIKE MUSH...
--STORM-- --IN DANGER!
WHA'M I S'POSED TA DO?
OBEY NANNY.
X-MAN IN TROUBLE!
GOTTA DO SOME-THING!
HAVOK-- NO!
SKYAM!
I NAILED IT!
THE SHIP'S GOING DOWN!
BUT-- WHAT ABOUT STORM?!


I'M PSI-SCANNING, FULL INTENSITY.
NO SIGN OF ANY THOUGHTS--
--NANNY, THE ORPHAN-MAKER--
--OR STORM.
Oh, MY LORD...
...WHAT HAVE I DONE?
LEGGO'A'ME--
THE FAULT IS AS MUCH MINE, TOVARISCH.
-- BEFORE I BLAST YOU, TOO!
CUT IT OUT, THE PAIR OF YOU!
STOP BELLY-ACHING ABOUT YOURSELVES--
--AND LOOK!
THERE'S NO NEED, ALISON.
WE'VE FOUND HER.
NEXT:
SISTERS


MARVEL
THE UNCANNY
X-MEN
TM
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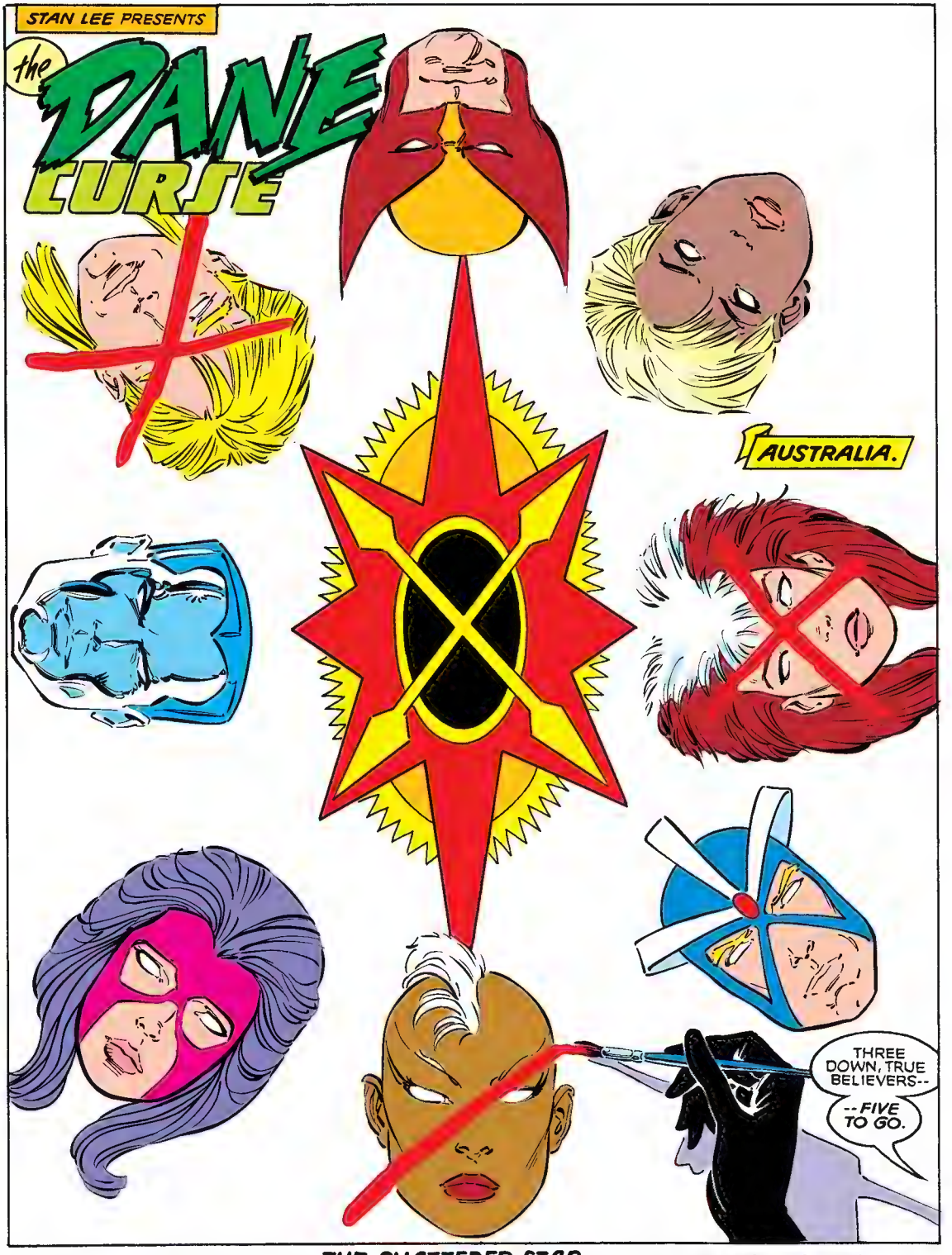
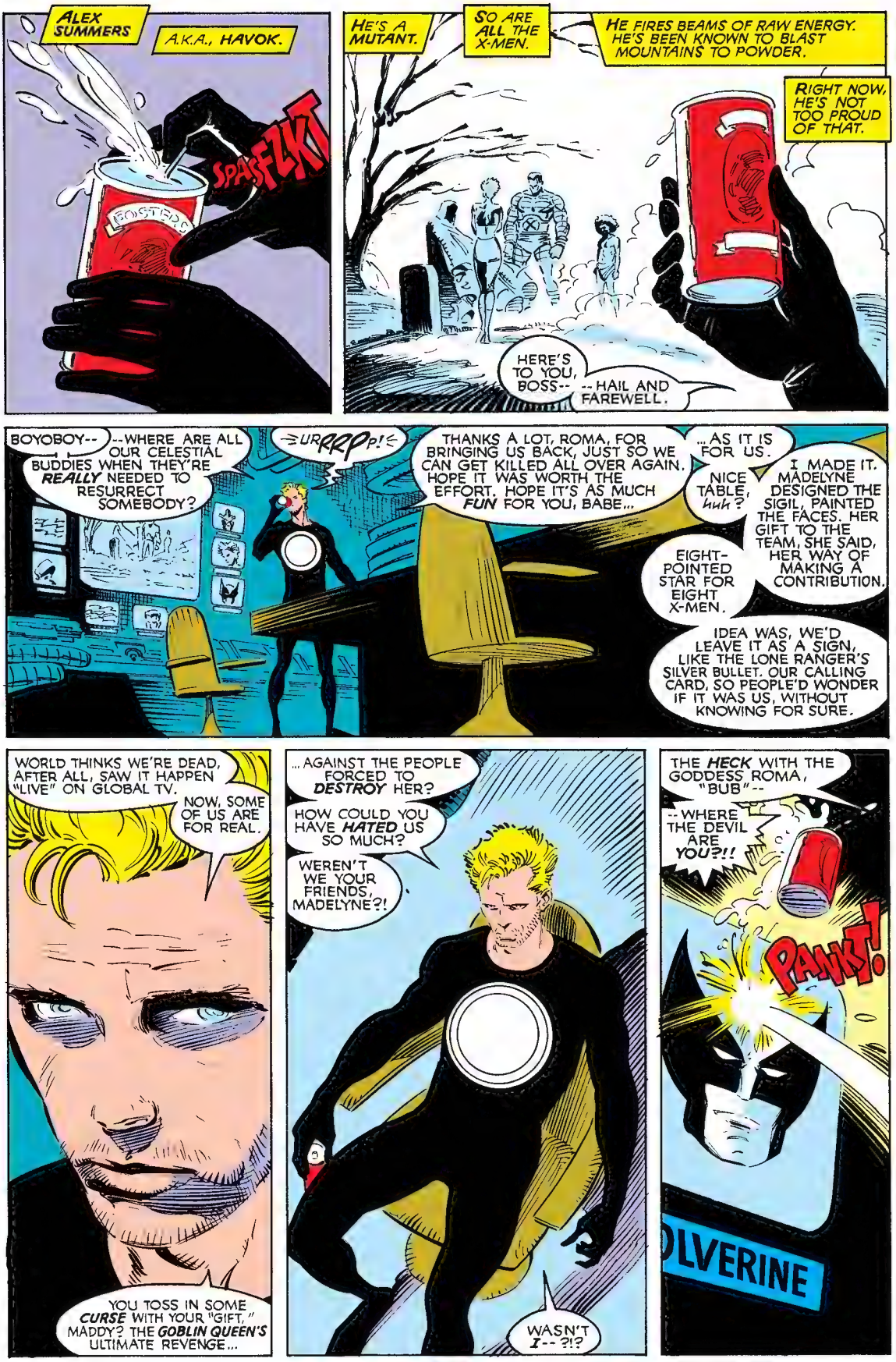
APPROVED BY THE COMICS CODE
AUTHORITY
NOW ON SALE TWICE A MONTH!
SILVESTRI w/GREEN

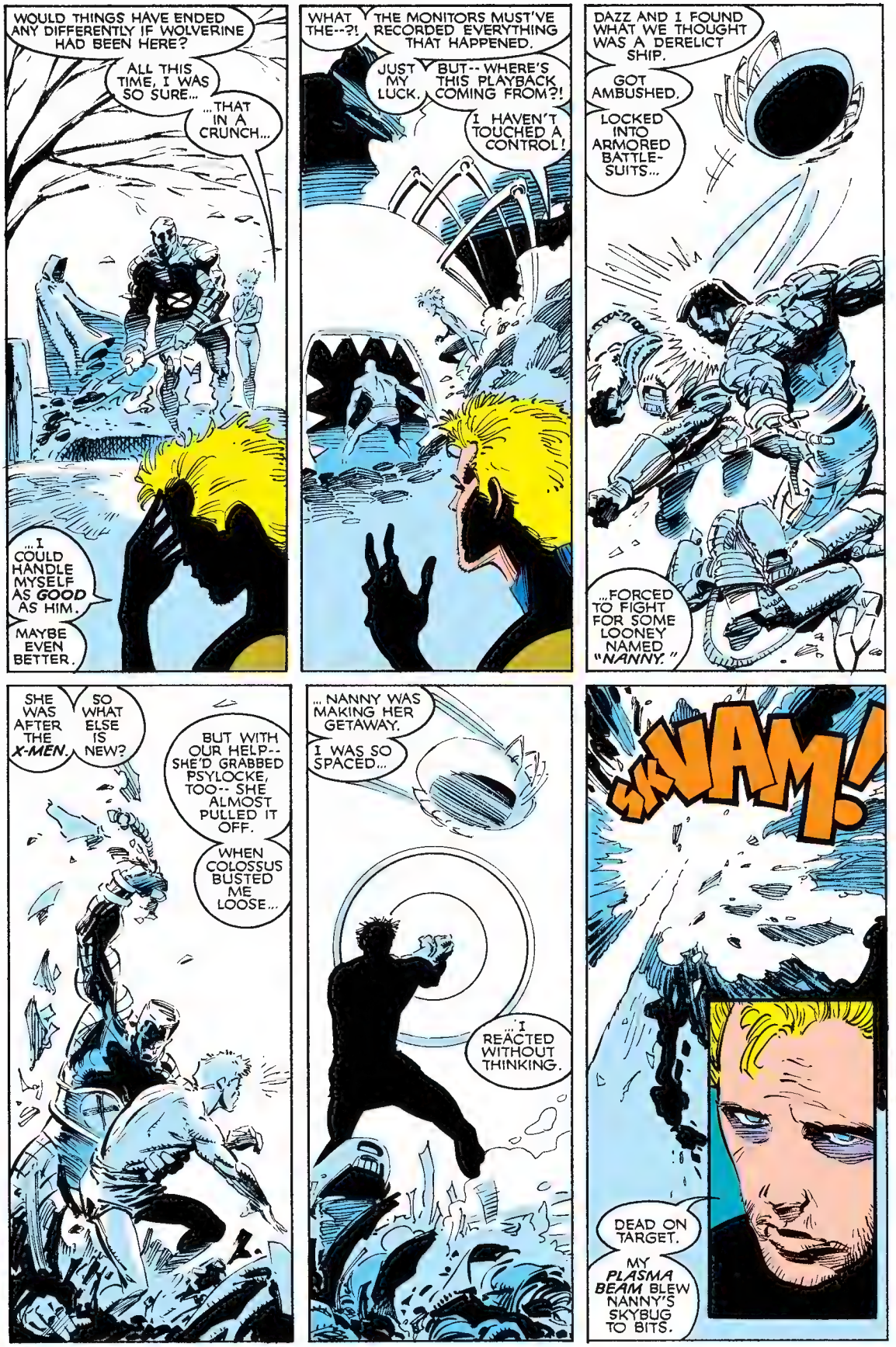


PART 1 OF THE PRELUDE TO **THE SHATTERED STAR,** STARRING THE UNCANNY **X-MEN**

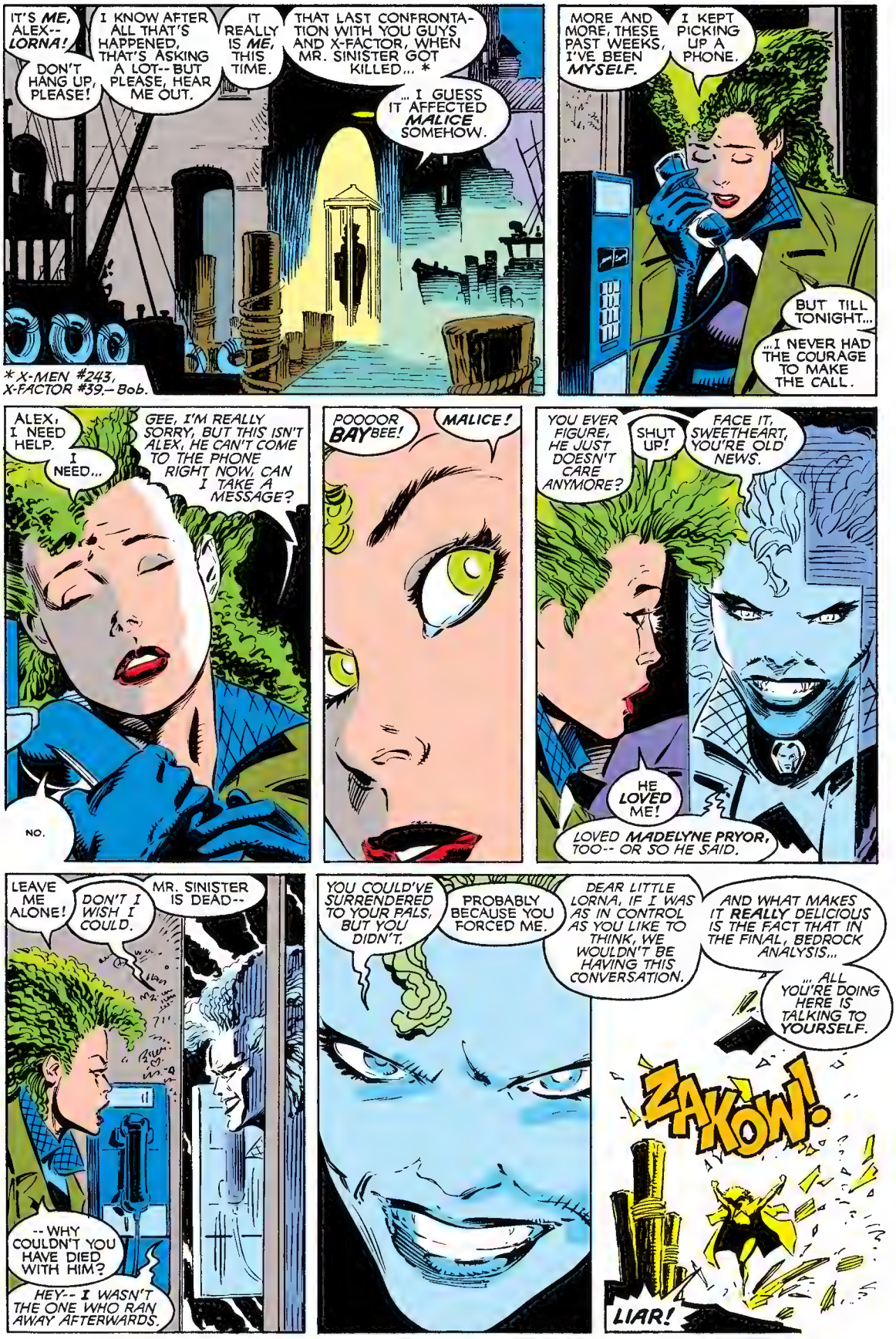
CHRIS CLAREMONT	MARC SILVESTRI	DAN GREEN	TOM ORZECHOWSKI	GLYNIS OLIVER	BOB HARRAS	TOM DeFALCO
WRITER	PENCILER	INKER	LETTERER	COLORIST	EDITOR	SCORE-KEEPER

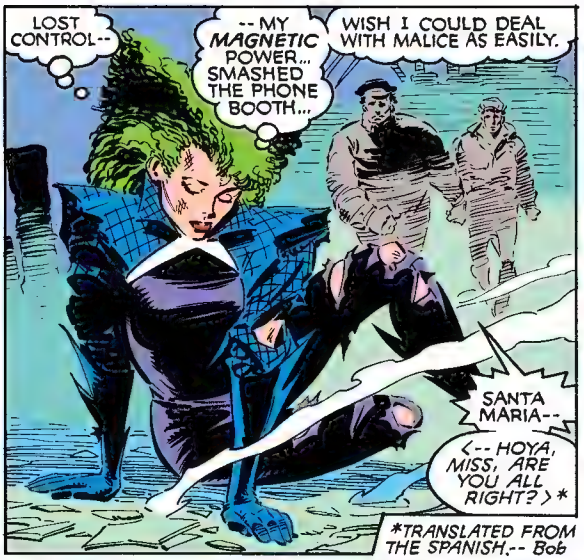
AND THE QUESTION OF THE HOUR, ON EVERYONE'S LIPS, IS...
COLOSSUS
ROGUE
TORM
...WHO'S NEXT?
SHZARAKK
STORM
OUR BELOVED FRIEND
MAY SHE AT LAST BE
GRANTED THE PEACE AND
JOY TOO OFTEN DENIED
HER IN LIFE


ALEX SUMMERS
A.K.A., HAVOK.
SPAAFZKT
BOOSTER
HE'S A MUTANT.
SO ARE ALL THE X-MEN.
HE FIRES BEAMS OF RAW ENERGY. HE'S BEEN KNOWN TO BLAST MOUNTAINS TO POWDER.
RIGHT NOW, HE'S NOT TOO PROUD OF THAT.
HERE'S TO YOU, BOSS--
--HAIL AND FAREWELL.
BOYOBOY--
--WHERE ARE ALL OUR CELESTIAL BUDDIES WHEN THEY'RE REALLY NEEDED TO RESURRECT SOMEBODY?
=URRRPp!=
THANKS A LOT, ROMA, FOR BRINGING US BACK, JUST SO WE CAN GET KILLED ALL OVER AGAIN. HOPE IT WAS WORTH THE EFFORT. HOPE IT'S AS MUCH FUN FOR YOU, BABE...
...AS IT IS FOR US.
NICE TABLE, huh?
I MADE IT. MADELYNE DESIGNED THE SIGIL, PAINTED THE FACES. HER GIFT TO THE TEAM, SHE SAID, HER WAY OF MAKING A CONTRIBUTION.
EIGHT-POINTED STAR FOR EIGHT X-MEN.
IDEA WAS, WE'D LEAVE IT AS A SIGN, LIKE THE LONE RANGER'S SILVER BULLET. OUR CALLING CARD, SO PEOPLE'D WONDER IF IT WAS US, WITHOUT KNOWING FOR SURE.
WORLD THINKS WE'RE DEAD, AFTER ALL, SAW IT HAPPEN "LIVE" ON GLOBAL TV.
NOW, SOME OF US ARE FOR REAL.
YOU TOSS IN SOME CURSE WITH YOUR "GIFT," MADDY? THE GOBLIN QUEEN'S ULTIMATE REVENGE...
...AGAINST THE PEOPLE FORCED TO DESTROY HER?
HOW COULD YOU HAVE HATED US SO MUCH?
WEREN'T WE YOUR FRIENDS, MADELYNE?!
WASN'T I--?!?
THE HECK WITH THE GODDESS ROMA, "BUB"--
--WHERE THE DEVIL ARE YOU?!!
PANK!
OLVERINE

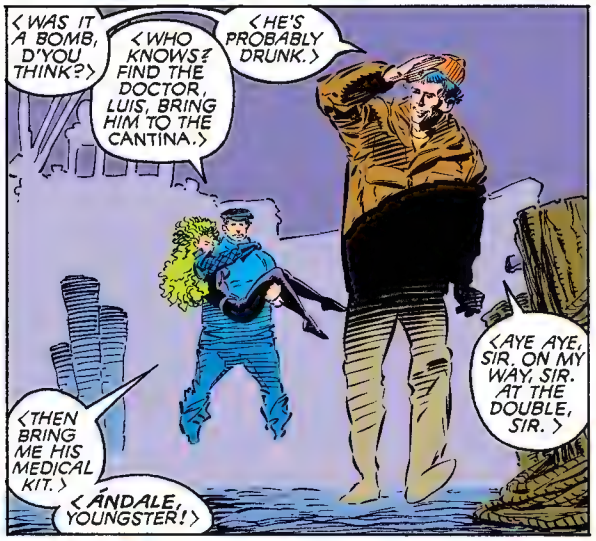

WOULD THINGS HAVE ENDED ANY DIFFERENTLY IF WOLVERINE HAD BEEN HERE?
ALL THIS TIME, I WAS SO SURE...
...THAT IN A CRUNCH...
...I COULD HANDLE MYSELF AS GOOD AS HIM.
MAYBE EVEN BETTER.
WHAT THE--?!
THE MONITORS MUST'VE RECORDED EVERYTHING THAT HAPPENED.
JUST MY LUCK.
BUT-- WHERE'S THIS PLAYBACK COMING FROM?!
I HAVEN'T TOUCHED A CONTROL!
DAZZ AND I FOUND WHAT WE THOUGHT WAS A DERELICT SHIP.
GOT AMBUSHED.
LOCKED INTO ARMORED BATTLE-SUITS...
...FORCED TO FIGHT FOR SOME LOONEY NAMED "NANNY."
SHE WAS AFTER THE X-MEN.
SO WHAT ELSE IS NEW?
BUT WITH OUR HELP-- SHE'D GRABBED PSYLOCKE, TOO-- SHE ALMOST PULLED IT OFF.
WHEN COLOSSUS BUSTED ME LOOSE...
...NANNY WAS MAKING HER GETAWAY.
I WAS SO SPACED...
...I REACTED WITHOUT THINKING.
KRAM!
DEAD ON TARGET.
MY PLASMA BEAM BLEW NANNY'S SKYBUG TO BITS.

ONLY PROBLEM WAS, STORM HAD BEEN TRYING TO STOP HER, TOO.
IT WAS AN ACCIDENT--
--ONE OF THOSE STUPID, POINTLESS, LOUSY THINGS THAT JUST SEEM TO HAPPEN SOMETIMES--
--BUT I SHOULD HAVE KNOWN BETTER!
I SHOULD HAVE DONE BETTER!
ZARK!
COMPUTER-- BACKFLASHING-- EXPLOSION--
UNNGNH
BAM!
RRRINNG!
SSSSSS SSS SSSSS
RRRINNG!
RRRINNG!
RRRIN-KLIK!
HELLO?
ALEX?!?
OH, THANK HEAVEN, I PRAYED IT'D BE YOU WHO ANSWERED.
SHOT
COLOSSUS


IT'S ME, ALEX-- LORNA!
DON'T HANG UP, PLEASE!
I KNOW AFTER ALL THAT'S HAPPENED, THAT'S ASKING A LOT-- BUT PLEASE, HEAR ME OUT.
IT REALLY IS ME, THIS TIME.
THAT LAST CONFRONTATION WITH YOU GUYS AND X-FACTOR, WHEN MR. SINISTER GOT KILLED... *
... I GUESS IT AFFECTED MALICE SOMEHOW.
* X-MEN #243, X-FACTOR #39.-Bob.
MORE AND MORE, THESE PAST WEEKS, I'VE BEEN MYSELF.
I KEPT PICKING UP A PHONE.
BUT TILL TONIGHT...
...I NEVER HAD THE COURAGE TO MAKE THE CALL.
ALEX, I NEED HELP.
I NEED...
GEE, I'M REALLY SORRY, BUT THIS ISN'T ALEX, HE CAN'T COME TO THE PHONE RIGHT NOW, CAN I TAKE A MESSAGE?
NO.
POOOOR BAYBEE!
MALICE!
YOU EVER FIGURE, HE JUST DOESN'T CARE ANYMORE?
SHUT UP!
FACE IT, SWEETHEART, YOU'RE OLD NEWS.
HE LOVED ME!
LOVED MADELYNE PRYOR, TOO-- OR SO HE SAID.
LEAVE ME ALONE!
DON'T I WISH I COULD.
MR. SINISTER IS DEAD--
-- WHY COULDN'T YOU HAVE DIED WITH HIM?
HEY-- I WASN'T THE ONE WHO RAN AWAY AFTERWARDS.
YOU COULD'VE SURRENDERED TO YOUR PALS, BUT YOU DIDN'T.
PROBABLY BECAUSE YOU FORCED ME.
DEAR LITTLE LORNA, IF I WAS AS IN CONTROL AS YOU LIKE TO THINK, WE WOULDN'T BE HAVING THIS CONVERSATION.
AND WHAT MAKES IT REALLY DELICIOUS IS THE FACT THAT IN THE FINAL, BEDROCK ANALYSIS...
... ALL YOU'RE DOING HERE IS TALKING TO YOURSELF.
ZAKOW!
LIAR!


LOST CONTROL--
-- MY MAGNETIC POWER... SMASHED THE PHONE BOOTH...
WISH I COULD DEAL WITH MALICE AS EASILY.
SANTA MARIA--
<-- HOYA, MISS, ARE YOU ALL RIGHT? >*
*TRANSLATED FROM THE SPANISH.-- Bob

I... I'M SORRY, I DON'T...
'S'OKAY, I SPEAK SOME ENGLISH. YOU HURT?
I DON'T, ah, NO, I...
<RAMON, SHE'S BLEEDING!>
<SMALL WONDER, WITH ALL THIS GLASS ABOUT.>


<WAS IT A BOMB, D'YOU THINK?>
<WHO KNOWS? FIND THE DOCTOR, LUIS, BRING HIM TO THE CANTINA.>
<HE'S PROBABLY DRUNK.>
<AYE AYE, SIR. ON MY WAY, SIR. AT THE DOUBLE, SIR. >
<THEN BRING ME HIS MEDICAL KIT. >
<ÁNDALE, YOUNGSTER!>

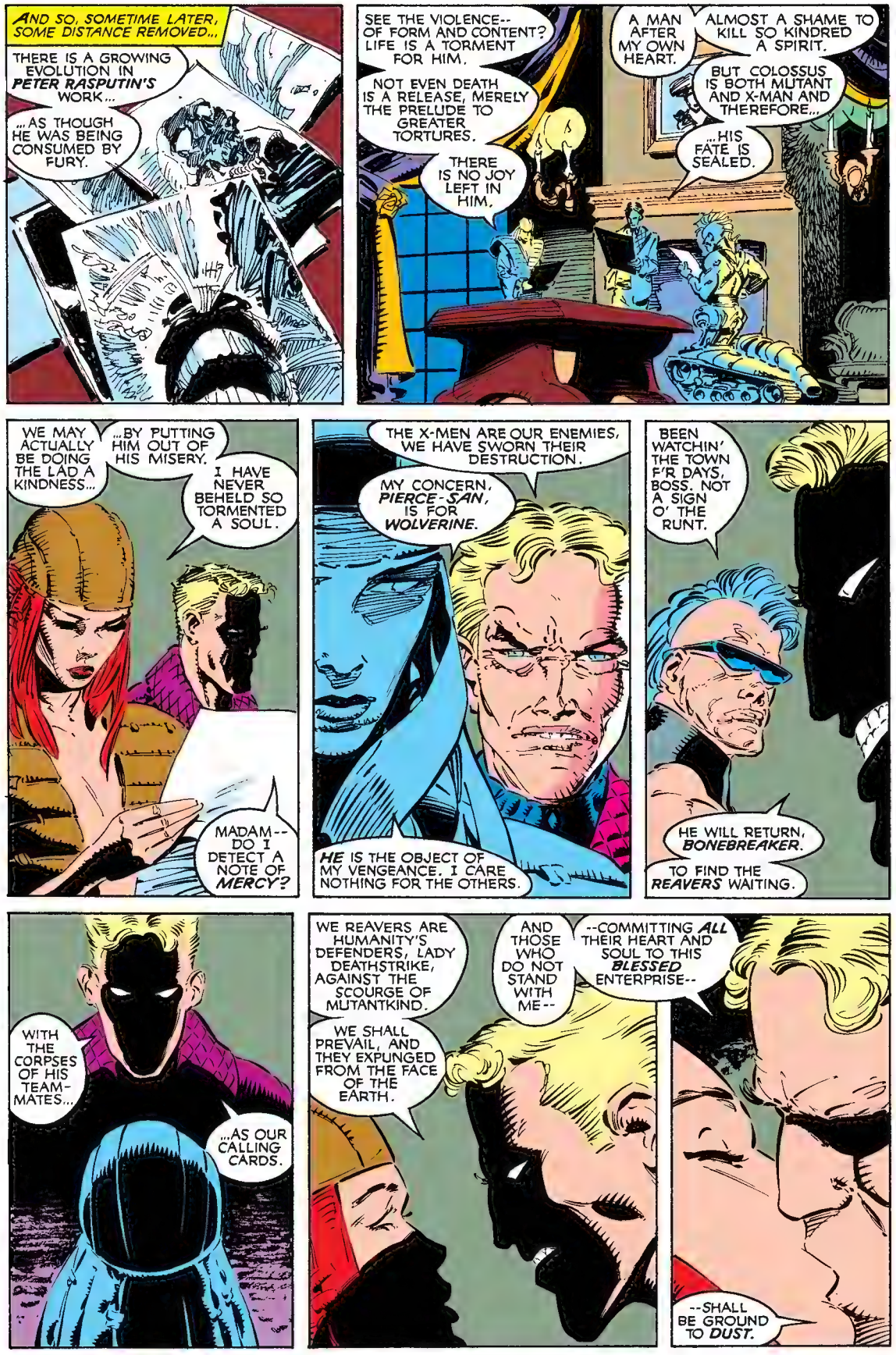
<OF ALL THE LUCK!>
<THE MOST BEAUTIFUL WOMAN ANY OF US HAVE EVER SEEN-->
<--AND RAMON GRABS HER FOR HIMSELF.>
<WONDER WHAT SHE WAS DOING DOWN ON THE DOCKS?>
<I MEAN, I'M YOUNG, I'M GOOD-LOOKING-->

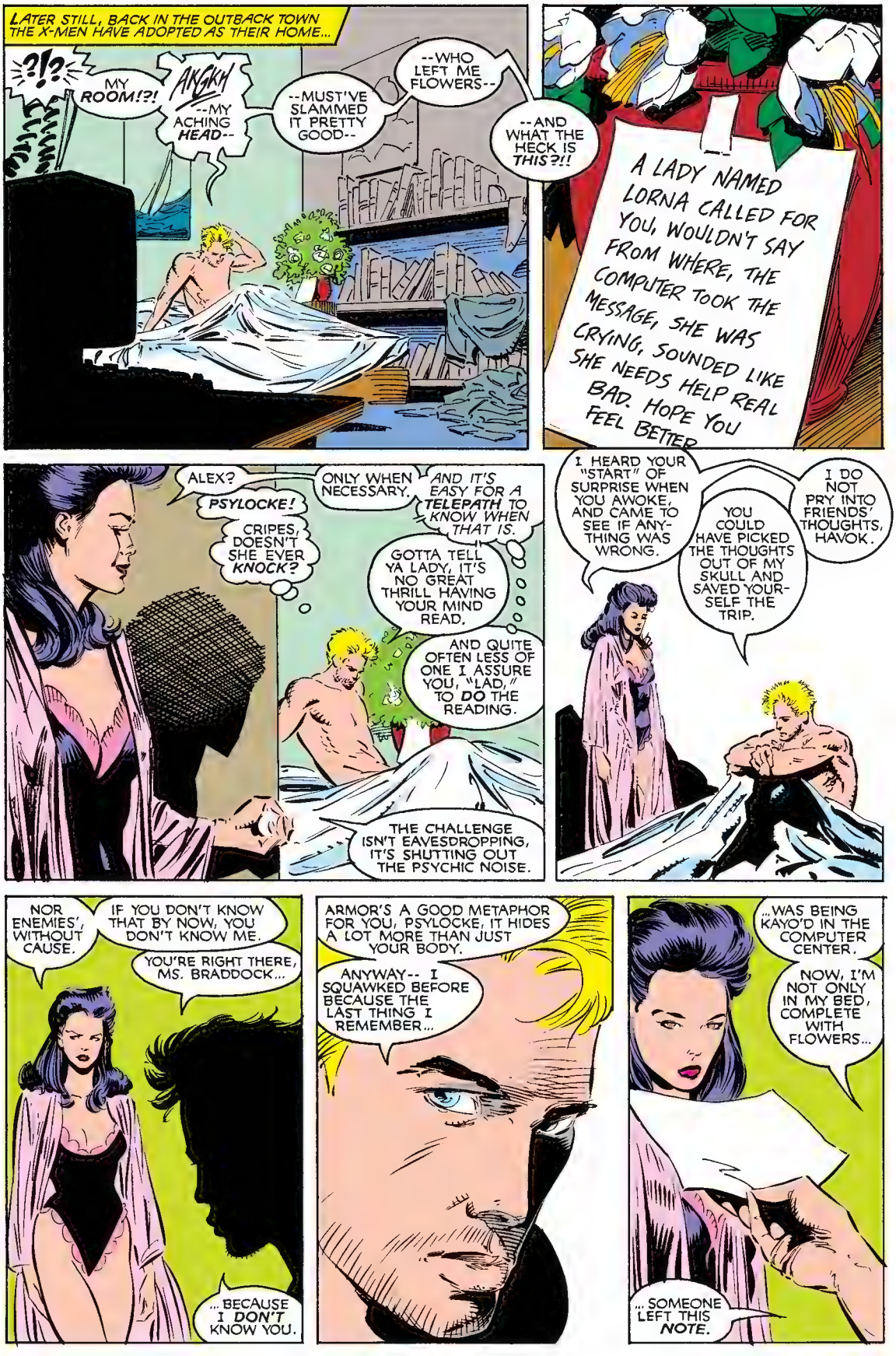
<--WHAT'S THAT OLD SEADOG GOT THAT I DON'T?>
<IN EVERY PORT, THERE'S ALWAYS SOMEONE. IT ISN'T FAIR.>
<WHOOPS! THERE'S THE SHIP, ALMOST MISSED IT IN THE FOG.>

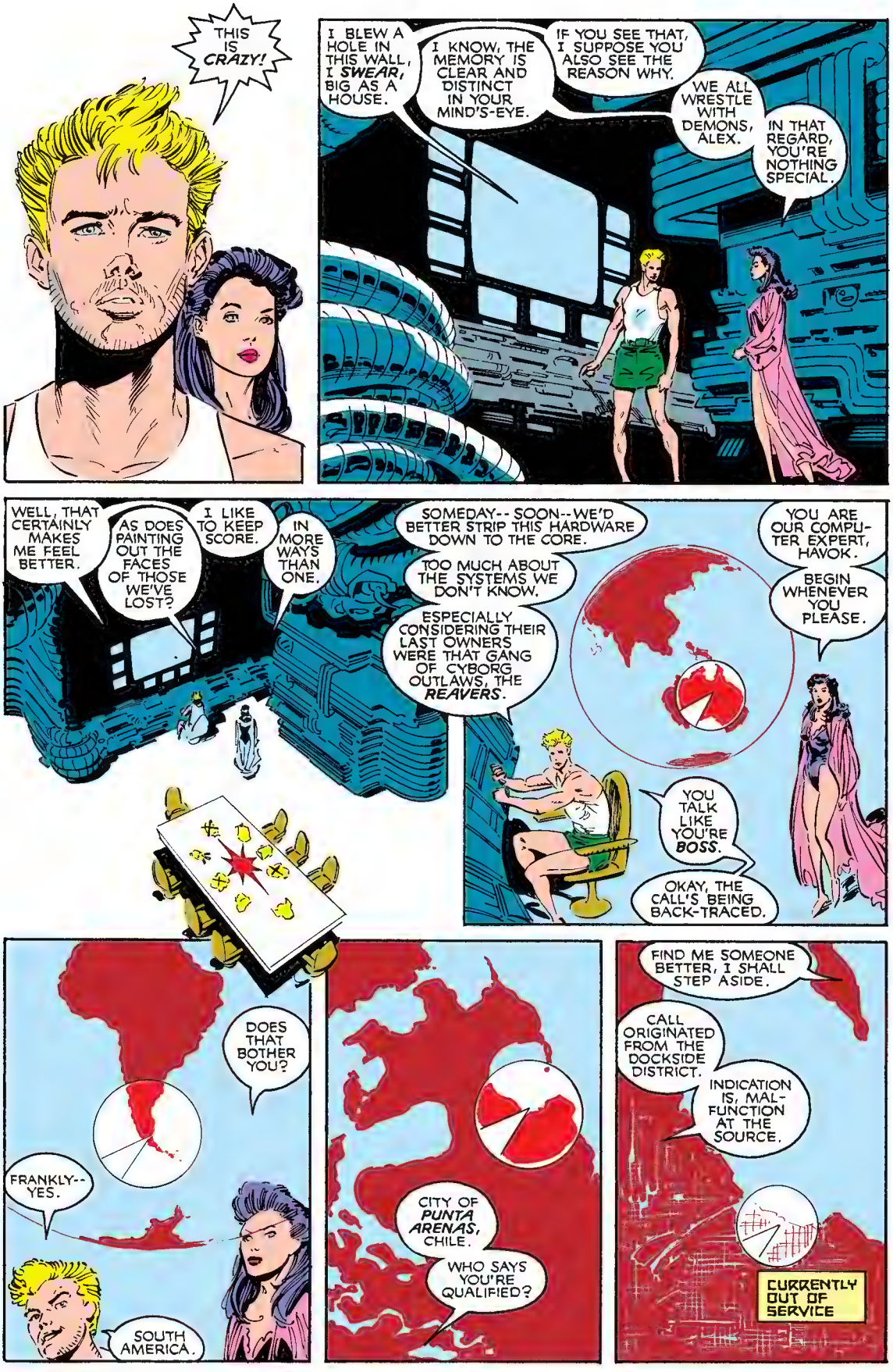
<JUST YOU WAIT, RAMON. I'M NOT BEATEN YET. THIS ONCE, I'M GIVING YOU-- >
--MADONNA!

CRUNCH!

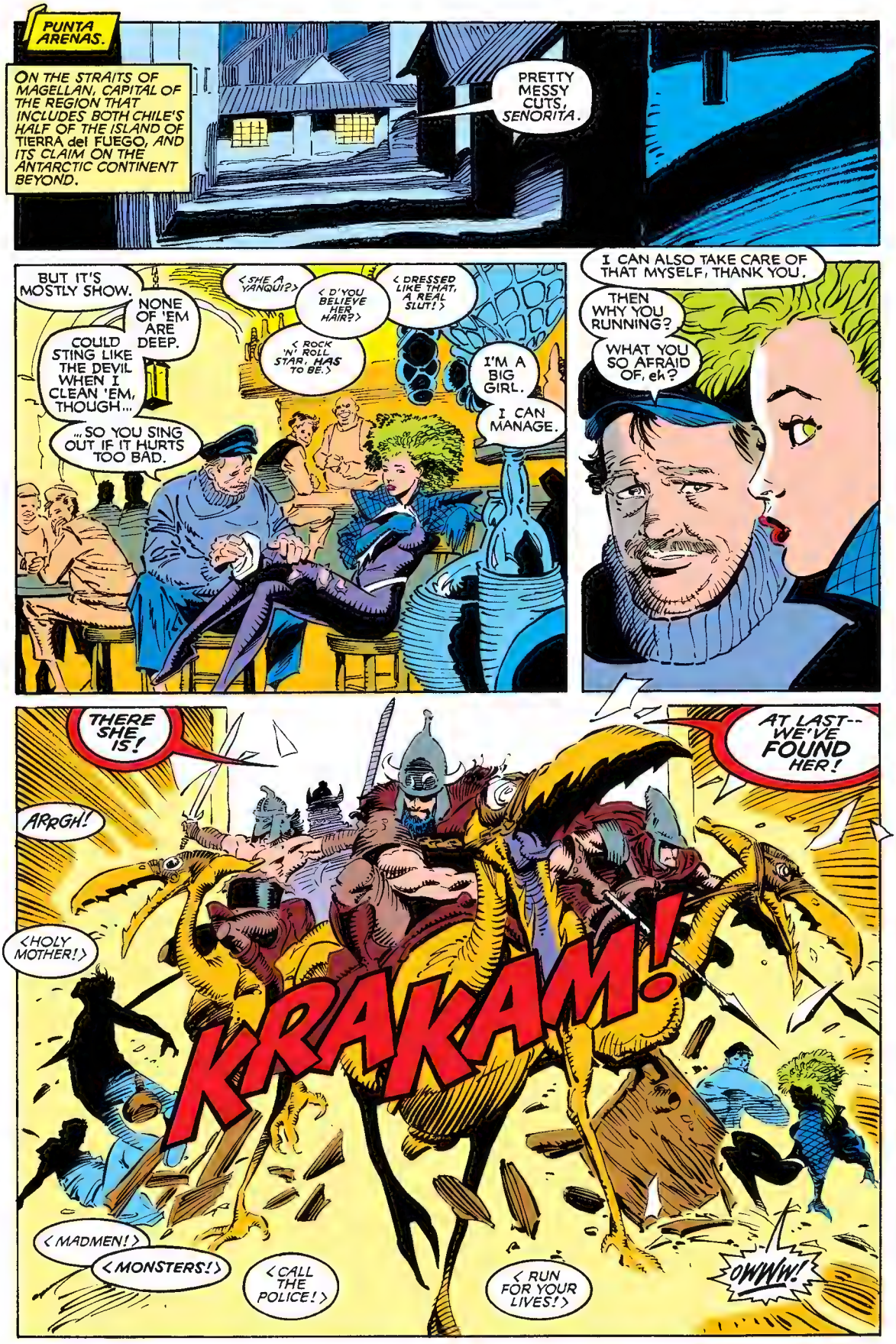
AUSTRALIA.
THE DEVIL TAKE THIS--
--I HAVE HAD ENOUGH!
WHAT THE BLAZES WAS THAT ALL ABOUT?
CAREFUL, COLE. DON'T LET HIM SPOT US.
CUT ME SOME SLACK, REESE.
THAT'S COLOSSUS, NOT WOLVERINE.
HE'S THE X-MEN'S MUSCLE...
...NOT THEIR TRACKER.
THERE IS NO HARM, TROOPER COLE...
...IN BEING PRUDENT.
THESE ARE THE RUSSIAN'S PAINTINGS AND SKETCHBOOKS.
WHY CAST THEM AWAY?
AND IN SUCH A RAGE??
WHO KNOWS, WHO CARES?
AIN'T ARTISTS S'POSED TA BE TEMPERMENTAL?
HEY, MAYBE HE DIDN'T LIKE WHAT HE DREW?
COLOSSUS IS THE MOST STABLE AND CENTERED OF THEM, THIS IS UNLIKE HIM.
TIME WE WERE ROLLIN', LADY DEATH-STRIKE.
WE DON'T WANT TO BLOW A GOOD RECON BY GETTING SPOTTED.

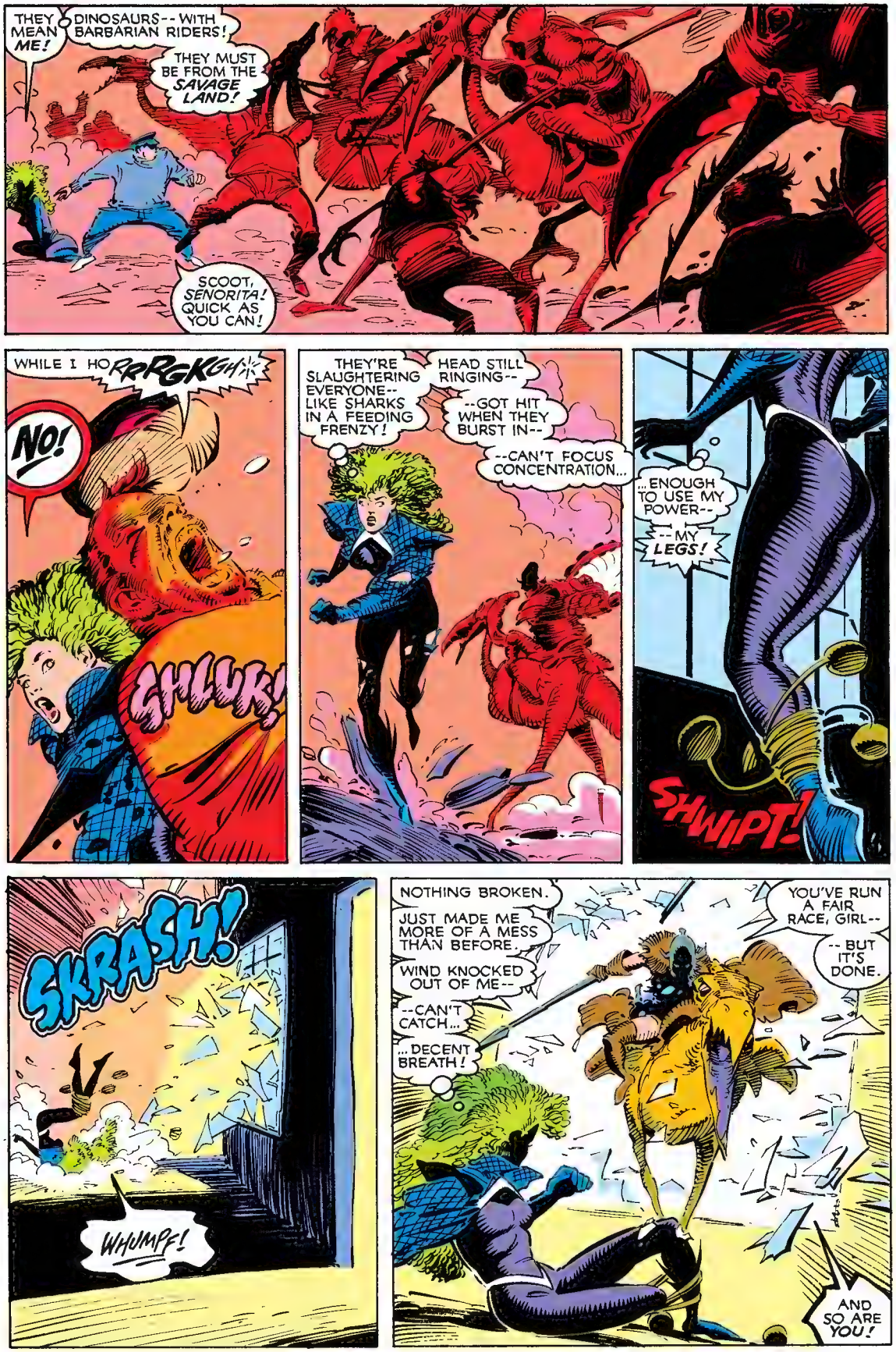

AND SO, SOMETIME LATER, SOME DISTANCE REMOVED...
THERE IS A GROWING EVOLUTION IN PETER RASPUTIN'S WORK...
...AS THOUGH HE WAS BEING CONSUMED BY FURY.
SEE THE VIOLENCE-- OF FORM AND CONTENT? LIFE IS A TORMENT FOR HIM.
NOT EVEN DEATH IS A RELEASE, MERELY THE PRELUDE TO GREATER TORTURES.
THERE IS NO JOY LEFT IN HIM.
A MAN AFTER MY OWN HEART.
ALMOST A SHAME TO KILL SO KINDRED A SPIRIT.
BUT COLOSSUS IS BOTH MUTANT AND X-MAN AND THEREFORE...
...HIS FATE IS SEALED.
WE MAY ACTUALLY BE DOING THE LAD A KINDNESS...
...BY PUTTING HIM OUT OF HIS MISERY.
I HAVE NEVER BEHELD SO TORMENTED A SOUL.
MADAM-- DO I DETECT A NOTE OF MERCY?
THE X-MEN ARE OUR ENEMIES, WE HAVE SWORN THEIR DESTRUCTION.
MY CONCERN, PIERCE-SAN, IS FOR WOLVERINE.
HE IS THE OBJECT OF MY VENGEANCE. I CARE NOTHING FOR THE OTHERS.
BEEN WATCHIN' THE TOWN F'R DAYS, BOSS. NOT A SIGN O' THE RUNT.
HE WILL RETURN, BONEBREAKER.
TO FIND THE REAVERS WAITING.
WITH THE CORPSES OF HIS TEAM-MATES...
...AS OUR CALLING CARDS.
WE REAVERS ARE HUMANITY'S DEFENDERS, LADY DEATHSTRIKE, AGAINST THE SCOURGE OF MUTANTKIND.
WE SHALL PREVAIL, AND THEY EXPUNGED FROM THE FACE OF THE EARTH.
AND THOSE WHO DO NOT STAND WITH ME--
--COMMITTING ALL THEIR HEART AND SOUL TO THIS BLESSED ENTERPRISE--
--SHALL BE GROUND TO DUST.


LATER STILL, BACK IN THE OUTBACK TOWN THE X-MEN HAVE ADOPTED AS THEIR HOME...
?!?
MY ROOM!?!
AKGKH --MY ACHING HEAD--
--MUST'VE SLAMMED IT PRETTY GOOD--
--WHO LEFT ME FLOWERS--
--AND WHAT THE HECK IS THIS?!!
A LADY NAMED LORNA CALLED FOR YOU, WOULDN'T SAY FROM WHERE, THE COMPUTER TOOK THE MESSAGE, SHE WAS CRYING, SOUNDED LIKE SHE NEEDS HELP REAL BAD. HOPE YOU FEEL BETTER
ALEX?
PSYLOCKE!
CRIPES, DOESN'T SHE EVER KNOCK?
ONLY WHEN NECESSARY.
AND IT'S EASY FOR A TELEPATH TO KNOW WHEN THAT IS.
GOTTA TELL YA LADY, IT'S NO GREAT THRILL HAVING YOUR MIND READ.
AND QUITE OFTEN LESS OF ONE I ASSURE YOU, "LAD," TO DO THE READING.
THE CHALLENGE ISN'T EAVESDROPPING, IT'S SHUTTING OUT THE PSYCHIC NOISE.
I HEARD YOUR "START" OF SURPRISE WHEN YOU AWOKE, AND CAME TO SEE IF ANY-THING WAS WRONG.
YOU COULD HAVE PICKED THE THOUGHTS OUT OF MY SKULL AND SAVED YOUR-SELF THE TRIP.
I DO NOT PRY INTO FRIENDS' THOUGHTS, HAVOK.
NOR ENEMIES', WITHOUT CAUSE.
IF YOU DON'T KNOW THAT BY NOW, YOU DON'T KNOW ME.
YOU'RE RIGHT THERE, MS. BRADDOCK...
... BECAUSE I DON'T KNOW YOU.
ARMOR'S A GOOD METAPHOR FOR YOU, PSYLOCKE, IT HIDES A LOT MORE THAN JUST YOUR BODY.
ANYWAY-- I SQUAWKED BEFORE BECAUSE THE LAST THING I REMEMBER...
...WAS BEING KAYO'D IN THE COMPUTER CENTER.
NOW, I'M NOT ONLY IN MY BED, COMPLETE WITH FLOWERS...
... SOMEONE LEFT THIS NOTE.

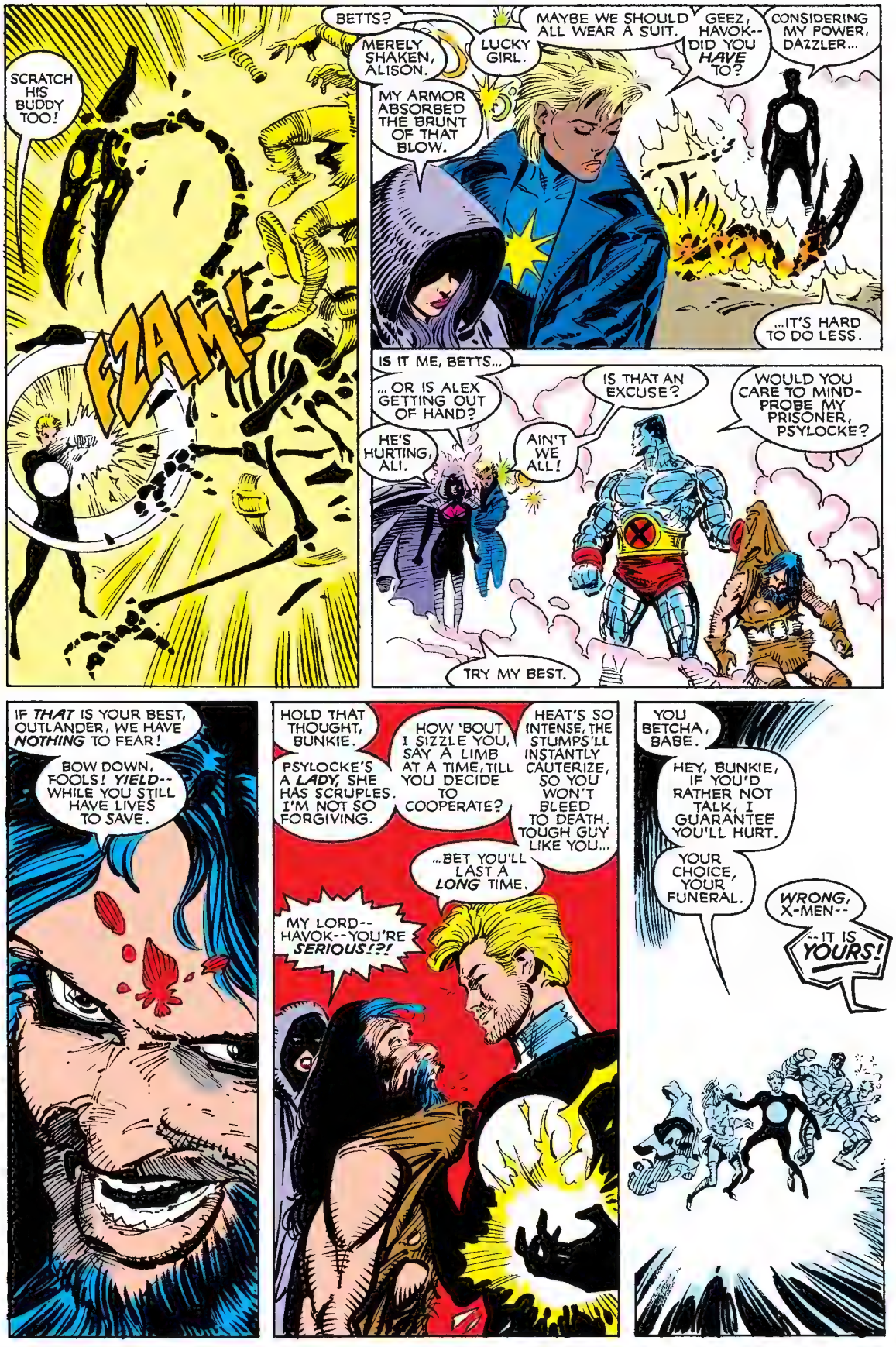

THIS IS CRAZY!
I BLEW A HOLE IN THIS WALL, I SWEAR, BIG AS A HOUSE.
I KNOW, THE MEMORY IS CLEAR AND DISTINCT IN YOUR MIND'S-EYE.
IF YOU SEE THAT, I SUPPOSE YOU ALSO SEE THE REASON WHY.
WE ALL WRESTLE WITH DEMONS, ALEX.
IN THAT REGARD, YOU'RE NOTHING SPECIAL.
WELL, THAT CERTAINLY MAKES ME FEEL BETTER.
AS DOES PAINTING OUT THE FACES OF THOSE WE'VE LOST?
I LIKE TO KEEP SCORE.
IN MORE WAYS THAN ONE.
SOMEDAY-- SOON--WE'D BETTER STRIP THIS HARDWARE DOWN TO THE CORE.
TOO MUCH ABOUT THE SYSTEMS WE DON'T KNOW.
ESPECIALLY CONSIDERING THEIR LAST OWNERS WERE THAT GANG OF CYBORG OUTLAWS, THE REAVERS.
YOU ARE OUR COMPUTER EXPERT, HAVOK.
BEGIN WHENEVER YOU PLEASE.
YOU TALK LIKE YOU'RE BOSS.
OKAY, THE CALL'S BEING BACK-TRACED.
DOES THAT BOTHER YOU?
FRANKLY-- YES.
SOUTH AMERICA.
CITY OF PUNTA ARENAS, CHILE.
WHO SAYS YOU'RE QUALIFIED?
FIND ME SOMEONE BETTER, I SHALL STEP ASIDE.
CALL ORIGINATED FROM THE DOCKSIDE DISTRICT.
INDICATION IS, MAL-FUNCTION AT THE SOURCE.
CURRENTLY OUT OF SERVICE

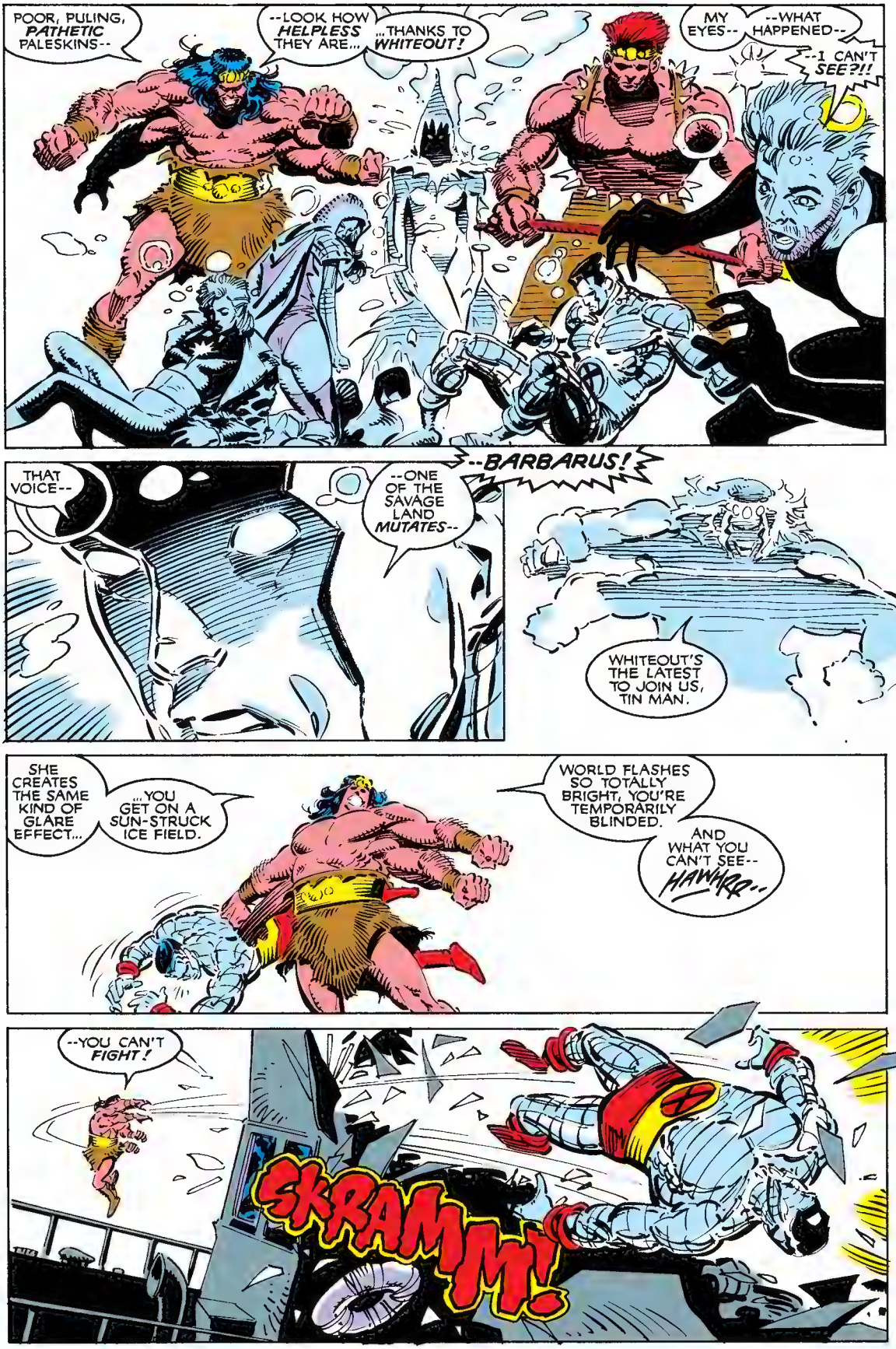
ALEX, WHERE ARE YOU GOING?!
WHERE D'YOU THINK?!
ALONE?!! ALEX, WHATEVER LORNA DANE MEANT TO YOU, SHE IS STILL A MARAUDER. THIS COULD BE A TRAP!
I KNOW LORNA LIKE I DO MYSELF--
--THAT WAS HER VOICE, PSYLOCKE, WITHOUT A TRACE OF MALICE IN IT.
AND WHOSE VOICE WILL WELCOME YOU WHEN YOU ARRIVE?
IF THE X-MEN ARE TO SURVIVE, HAVOK--
--NOW MORE THAN EVER, WE HAVE TO BE A TEAM.
AND SO, AFTER COLOSSUS AND DAZZLER HAVE BEEN ALERTED AND BRIEFED...
WHERE THE BLAZES IS PSYLOCKE?
WHO KNOWS WHAT'S HAPPENING TO LORNA, WE'VE GOTTA GO!
DON'T PUSH SO HARD, ALEX.
THAT'S WHAT GOT US CLOBBERED BY NANNY, REMEMBER?
ANY OF YOU EVER GOING TO LET ME FORGET?
ABOUT TIME, LADY!
MY APOLOGIES FOR THE DELAY.
I'VE BEEN PSI-SCANNING THE TOWN FOR INTRUDERS.
SINCE NONE OF US HELPED HAVOK I WAS TRYING TO DETERMINE IF ANYONE ELSE IS ABOUT WHO MIGHT HAVE DONE SO.
NO LUCK, huh?
PERHAPS THE COMPUTER WAS RESPONSIBLE?
AFTER ALL, IT REPAIRED ITSELF.
THAT, AMIGO, IS NOT A COMFORTING THOUGHT.
MAYBE GATEWAY, THEN.
WOULDN'T THAT BE A HOOT-- TO DISCOVER THAT OUR OLD, MUTE, MUTANT TELEPORTER WAS TAKING CARE OF US, JUST LIKE PROFESSOR X USED TO.


PUNTA ARENAS.
ON THE STRAITS OF MAGELLAN, CAPITAL OF THE REGION THAT INCLUDES BOTH CHILE'S HALF OF THE ISLAND OF TIERRA del FUEGO, AND ITS CLAIM ON THE ANTARCTIC CONTINENT BEYOND.
PRETTY MESSY CUTS, SENORITA.
BUT IT'S MOSTLY SHOW.
NONE OF 'EM ARE DEEP.
COULD STING LIKE THE DEVIL WHEN I CLEAN 'EM, THOUGH...
...SO YOU SING OUT IF IT HURTS TOO BAD.
<SHE A YANQUI?>
<D'YOU BELIEVE HER HAIR?>
<DRESSED LIKE THAT, A REAL SLUT!>
<ROCK 'N' ROLL STAR, HAS TO BE.>
I'M A BIG GIRL.
I CAN MANAGE.
I CAN ALSO TAKE CARE OF THAT MYSELF, THANK YOU.
THEN WHY YOU RUNNING?
WHAT YOU SO AFRAID OF, eh?
THERE SHE IS!
AT LAST-- WE'VE FOUND HER!
ARRGH!
<HOLY MOTHER!>
KRAKAM!
<MADMEN!>
<MONSTERS!>
<CALL THE POLICE!>
<RUN FOR YOUR LIVES!>
OWWW!


THEY MEAN ME!
DINOSAURS -- WITH BARBARIAN RIDERS!
THEY MUST BE FROM THE SAVAGE LAND!
SCOOT, SENORITA! QUICK AS YOU CAN!
WHILE I HO RRRGKGH!
NO!
GHLUK!
THEY'RE SLAUGHTERING EVERYONE -- LIKE SHARKS IN A FEEDING FRENZY!
HEAD STILL RINGING --
--GOT HIT WHEN THEY BURST IN --
--CAN'T FOCUS CONCENTRATION...
...ENOUGH TO USE MY POWER --
--MY LEGS!
SHWIPT!
SKRASH!
WHUMPF!
NOTHING BROKEN.
JUST MADE ME MORE OF A MESS THAN BEFORE.
WIND KNOCKED OUT OF ME --
--CAN'T CATCH...
...DECENT BREATH!
YOU'VE RUN A FAIR RACE, GIRL --
-- BUT IT'S DONE.
AND SO ARE YOU!

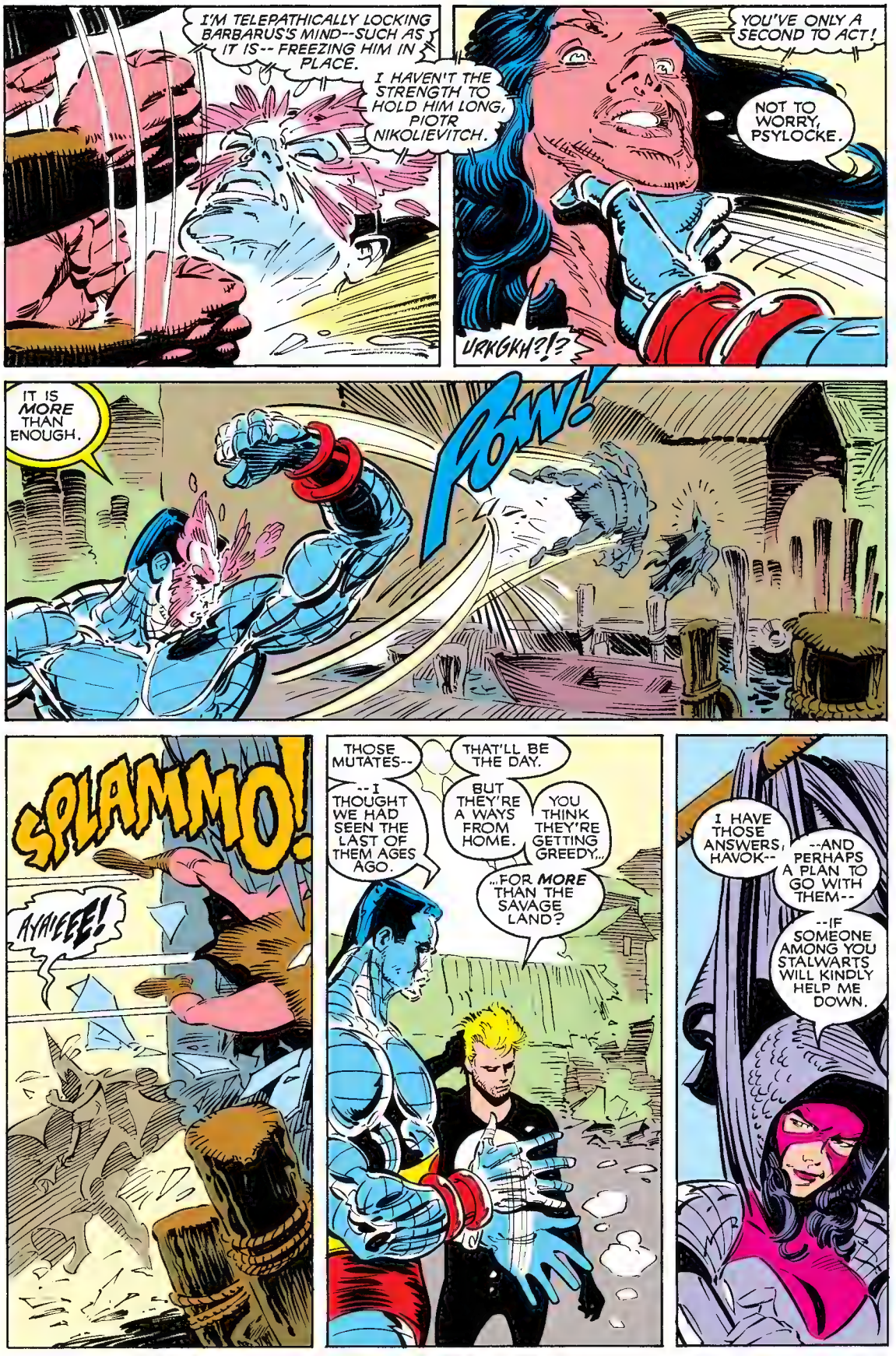
PRETTY MUCH SIMULTANEOUSLY, BACK BY THE RUINED PHONE BOOTH...
...OUR HEROES EMERGE FROM GATEWAY'S TELEPORTAL, AFTER AN INSTANTANEOUS JAUNT ACROSS THE PACIFIC FROM CENTRAL AUSTRALIA...
REMEMBER--GATEWAY CAN ONLY TELEPORT US HOME FROM THE PLACE WE ARRIVED.
YES, BOSS.
BOY, SOMEBODY SURE WHOMPED THE DAYLIGHTS OUT OF THAT BOOTH.
BWHAM!
NO SIGN OF LORNA.
AND WITHOUT WOLVIE, WE CAN'T FOLLOW HER TRAIL...
IF SHE'S NEARBY, A PSI-SEARCH SHOULD--
--GOOD LORD!
RUN
THE FIRE
THE TOWN--
MY ARM
FIGHT BACK
--UNDER ATTACK--
I'M SORRY
--EVERYONE SCREAMING INSIDE MY HEAD--
SCARED
KILL KILL KILL
--SLAYERS AND SLAIN--
DEFILE THE OUTLANDERS' HOMES AS THEY DID OURS
GLORY
SHRIEK
--TOO MUCH LUST--
--TOO MUCH PASSION--
--TOO MUCH FEAR--
--CAN'T BLOCK IT
OWHWW!
KWUDD!
PSYLOCKE IS DOWN!
THIS WILL DEAL WITH THE SWINE WHO STRUCK HER!
KRAKOW!

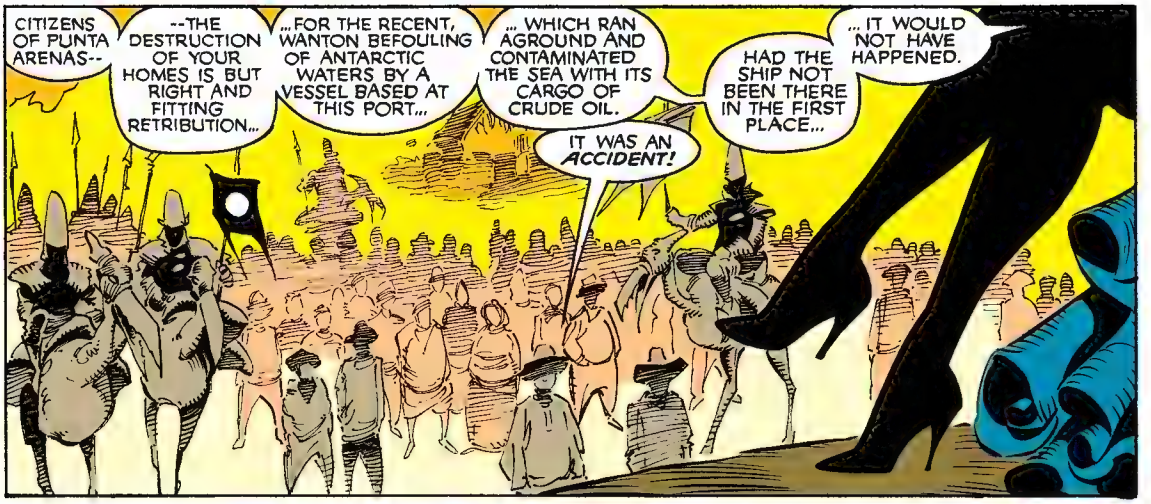

SCRATCH HIS BUDDY TOO!
FZAM!
BETTS?
MERELY SHAKEN, ALISON.
LUCKY GIRL.
MAYBE WE SHOULD ALL WEAR A SUIT.
GEEZ, HAVOK--DID YOU HAVE TO?
CONSIDERING MY POWER, DAZZLER...
MY ARMOR ABSORBED THE BRUNT OF THAT BLOW.
...IT'S HARD TO DO LESS.
IS IT ME, BETTS...
...OR IS ALEX GETTING OUT OF HAND?
HE'S HURTING, ALI.
AIN'T WE ALL!
IS THAT AN EXCUSE?
WOULD YOU CARE TO MIND-PROBE MY PRISONER, PSYLOCKE?
TRY MY BEST.
IF THAT IS YOUR BEST, OUTLANDER, WE HAVE NOTHING TO FEAR!
BOW DOWN, FOOLS! YIELD--WHILE YOU STILL HAVE LIVES TO SAVE.
HOLD THAT THOUGHT, BUNKIE.
PSYLOCKE'S A LADY, SHE HAS SCRUPLES. I'M NOT SO FORGIVING.
HOW 'BOUT I SIZZLE YOU, SAY A LIMB AT A TIME, TILL YOU DECIDE TO COOPERATE?
HEAT'S SO INTENSE, THE STUMPS'LL INSTANTLY CAUTERIZE, SO YOU WON'T BLEED TO DEATH. TOUGH GUY LIKE YOU...
...BET YOU'LL LAST A LONG TIME.
MY LORD--HAVOK--YOU'RE SERIOUS!?!
YOU BETCHA, BABE.
HEY, BUNKIE, IF YOU'D RATHER NOT TALK, I GUARANTEE YOU'LL HURT.
YOUR CHOICE, YOUR FUNERAL.
WRONG, X-MEN--
--IT IS YOURS!

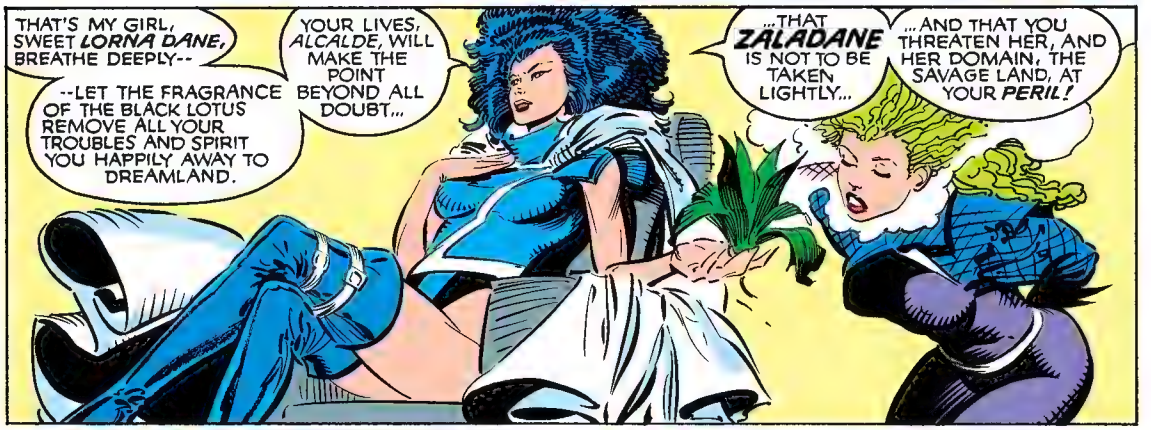

POOR, PULING, PATHETIC PALESKINS--
--LOOK HOW HELPLESS THEY ARE...
...THANKS TO WHITEOUT!
MY EYES--
--WHAT HAPPENED--
--I CAN'T SEE?!!
THAT VOICE--
--ONE OF THE SAVAGE LAND MUTATES--
--BARBARUS!
WHITEOUT'S THE LATEST TO JOIN US, TIN MAN.
SHE CREATES THE SAME KIND OF GLARE EFFECT...
...YOU GET ON A SUN-STRUCK ICE FIELD.
WORLD FLASHES SO TOTALLY BRIGHT, YOU'RE TEMPORARILY BLINDED.
AND WHAT YOU CAN'T SEE--
HAWHRR--
--YOU CAN'T FIGHT!
SKRAMM!

MY OWN LIGHT POWERS MUST NEUTRALIZE WHITEOUT'S ATTACK.
I CAN STILL SORT OF SEE.
TWO CAN PLAY AT THAT GAME, CHUM!
MY DAZZLE-BLAST SHOULD STOP YOU IN YOUR TRACKS.
AMPHIBIUS HAS THE MINDWITCH!
THUGD!
ARMOR...
...KEEPING ME...
...FROM BEING SERIOUSLY HURT--
--BUT TOO SHAKEN...
...TO FOCUS THOUGHTS...
...TO DEFEND... SELF
THAM
WHAM
A WASTED EFFORT, FAIR ONE...
...AGAINST GAZA...
--WHO HAS BEEN BLIND SINCE BIRTH!
OWHW!
FRIENDS CAN'T HELP YOU, PRETTY.
YOU'RE ALL ALONE...
...FOR AMPHIBIUS TO PLAY WITH!

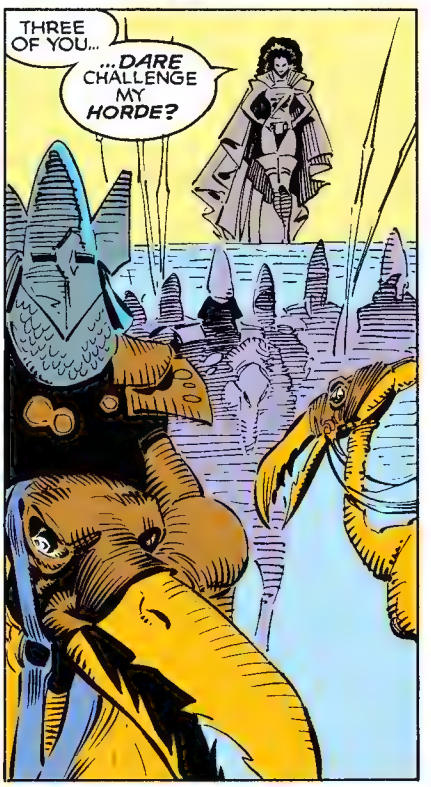
Huh?
WHY YOU SMILING, PRETTY?
YOU LIKE THE THOUGHT OF BEING CUT?
ALISON?
VOICE IN MY HEAD--
--PAIN IS MAKING ME LOOPY.
NO! IT'S PSYLOCKE!
GAZA IS CLOSING IN BEHIND YOU!
ON MY CUE...
...ROLL AND FIRE!
HERE GOES NOTHING--
--DOUBLE-BARRELED SOLID LIGHT PHOTON FORCE BLAST!
WHOOMF!
ZAK!
ZAM!
ONE SHOT FOR GAZA, BUT WHO'S THE OTHER FOR?
ME.
AND A MOST SPLENDID ONE IT IS, TOO.
ZAP!
COLOSSUS!
THIS ONCE, SHINYSKIN...
...FLESH WILL PROVE STRONGER-- AND DEADLIER-- THAN STEEL!
BAM BAM BAM BAM BAM
BAM BAM BAM
BAM BAM BAM BAM

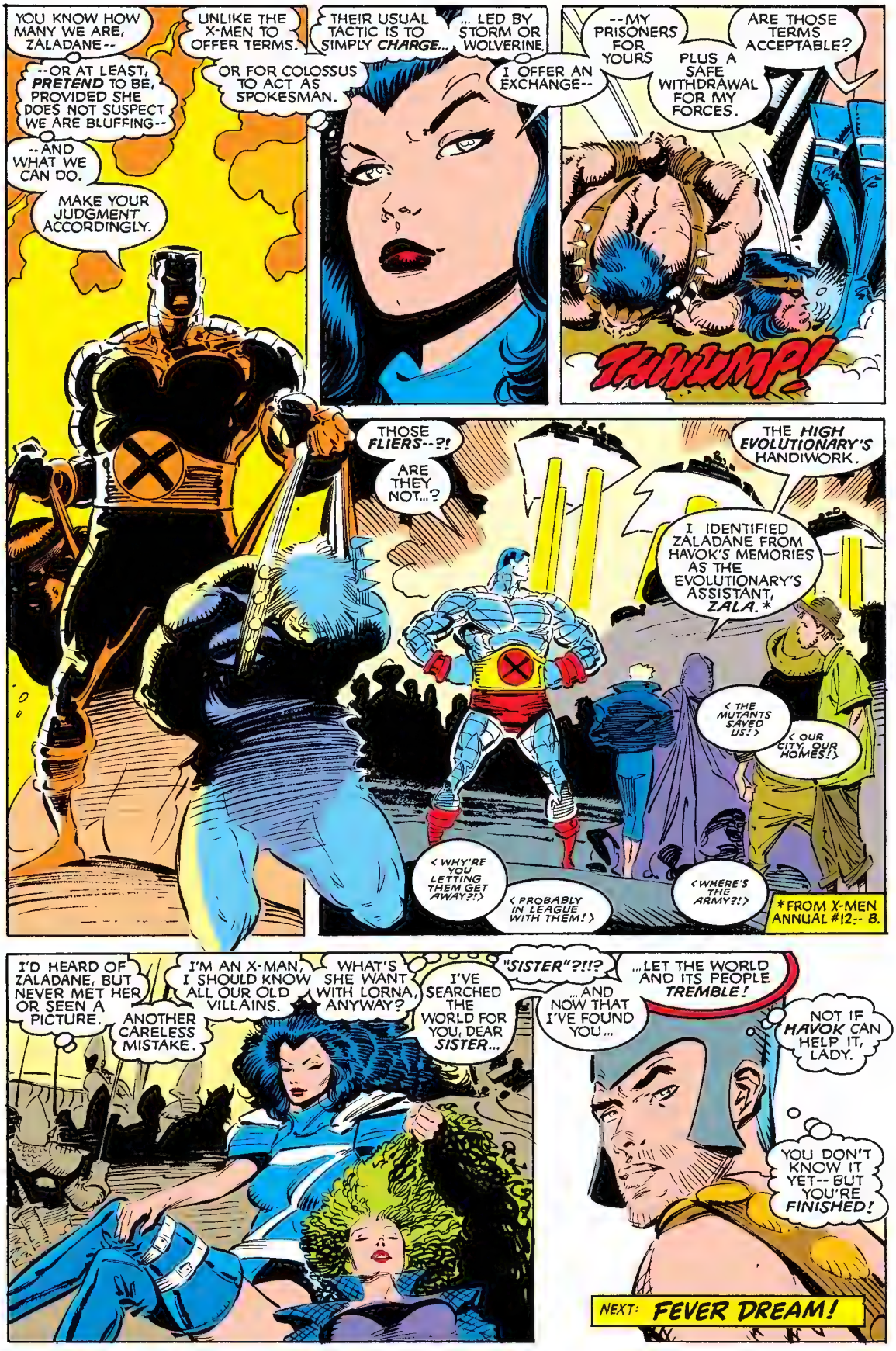

I'M TELEPATHICALLY LOCKING BARBARUS'S MIND--SUCH AS IT IS-- FREEZING HIM IN PLACE.
I HAVEN'T THE STRENGTH TO HOLD HIM LONG, PIOTR NIKOLIEVITCH.
YOU'VE ONLY A SECOND TO ACT!
NOT TO WORRY, PSYLOCKE.
URKGKH?!?
IT IS MORE THAN ENOUGH.
POW!
SPLAMMO!
AYAIEEE!
THOSE MUTATES--
--I THOUGHT WE HAD SEEN THE LAST OF THEM AGES AGO.
THAT'LL BE THE DAY.
BUT THEY'RE A WAYS FROM HOME.
YOU THINK THEY'RE GETTING GREEDY,...
...FOR MORE THAN THE SAVAGE LAND?
I HAVE THOSE ANSWERS, HAVOK--
--AND PERHAPS A PLAN TO GO WITH THEM--
--IF SOMEONE AMONG YOU STALWARTS WILL KINDLY HELP ME DOWN.


CITIZENS OF PUNTA ARENAS--
--THE DESTRUCTION OF YOUR HOMES IS BUT RIGHT AND FITTING RETRIBUTION...
...FOR THE RECENT, WANTON BEFOULING OF ANTARCTIC WATERS BY A VESSEL BASED AT THIS PORT...
... WHICH RAN AGROUND AND CONTAMINATED THE SEA WITH ITS CARGO OF CRUDE OIL.
IT WAS AN ACCIDENT!
HAD THE SHIP NOT BEEN THERE IN THE FIRST PLACE...
... IT WOULD NOT HAVE HAPPENED.


THAT'S MY GIRL, SWEET LORNA DANE, BREATHE DEEPLY--
--LET THE FRAGRANCE OF THE BLACK LOTUS REMOVE ALL YOUR TROUBLES AND SPIRIT YOU HAPPILY AWAY TO DREAMLAND.
YOUR LIVES, ALCALDE, WILL MAKE THE POINT BEYOND ALL DOUBT...
...THAT ZALADANE IS NOT TO BE TAKEN LIGHTLY...
...AND THAT YOU THREATEN HER, AND HER DOMAIN, THE SAVAGE LAND, AT YOUR PERIL!

FIRSTLY, BIMBO, THE SAVAGE LAND IS NO WAY "YOUR" DOMAIN.
SECONDLY, TORCHING THIS CITY IS ONE THING...
...BUT IF YOU'RE SERIOUS ABOUT KILLING ITS PEOPLE...
...YOU'D BETTER BE PREPARED TO SACRIFICE YOUR OWN LIFE IN THE BARGAIN.


THREE OF YOU...
...DARE CHALLENGE MY HORDE?


YOU KNOW HOW MANY WE ARE, ZALADANE--
--OR AT LEAST, PRETEND TO BE, PROVIDED SHE DOES NOT SUSPECT WE ARE BLUFFING--
--AND WHAT WE CAN DO.
MAKE YOUR JUDGMENT ACCORDINGLY.
UNLIKE THE X-MEN TO OFFER TERMS.
OR FOR COLOSSUS TO ACT AS SPOKESMAN.
THEIR USUAL TACTIC IS TO SIMPLY CHARGE...
... LED BY STORM OR WOLVERINE.
I OFFER AN EXCHANGE--
--MY PRISONERS FOR YOURS
PLUS A SAFE WITHDRAWAL FOR MY FORCES.
ARE THOSE TERMS ACCEPTABLE?
THUMP!
THOSE FLIERS--?!
ARE THEY NOT...?
THE HIGH EVOLUTIONARY'S HANDIWORK.
I IDENTIFIED ZALADANE FROM HAVOK'S MEMORIES AS THE EVOLUTIONARY'S ASSISTANT, ZALA.*
< THE MUTANTS SAVED US! >
< OUR CITY, OUR HOMES! >
< WHY'RE YOU LETTING THEM GET AWAY?! >
< PROBABLY IN LEAGUE WITH THEM! >
< WHERE'S THE ARMY?! >
*FROM X-MEN ANNUAL #12.-- B.
I'D HEARD OF ZALADANE, BUT NEVER MET HER OR SEEN A PICTURE.
I'M AN X-MAN, I SHOULD KNOW ALL OUR OLD VILLAINS.
ANOTHER CARELESS MISTAKE.
WHAT'S SHE WANT WITH LORNA, ANYWAY?
I'VE SEARCHED THE WORLD FOR YOU, DEAR SISTER...
"SISTER"?!!?
...AND NOW THAT I'VE FOUND YOU...
...LET THE WORLD AND ITS PEOPLE TREMBLE!
NOT IF HAVOK CAN HELP IT, LADY.
YOU DON'T KNOW IT YET-- BUT YOU'RE FINISHED!
NEXT: FEVER DREAM!

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X-MEN®
GUEST-STARRING KA-ZAR!
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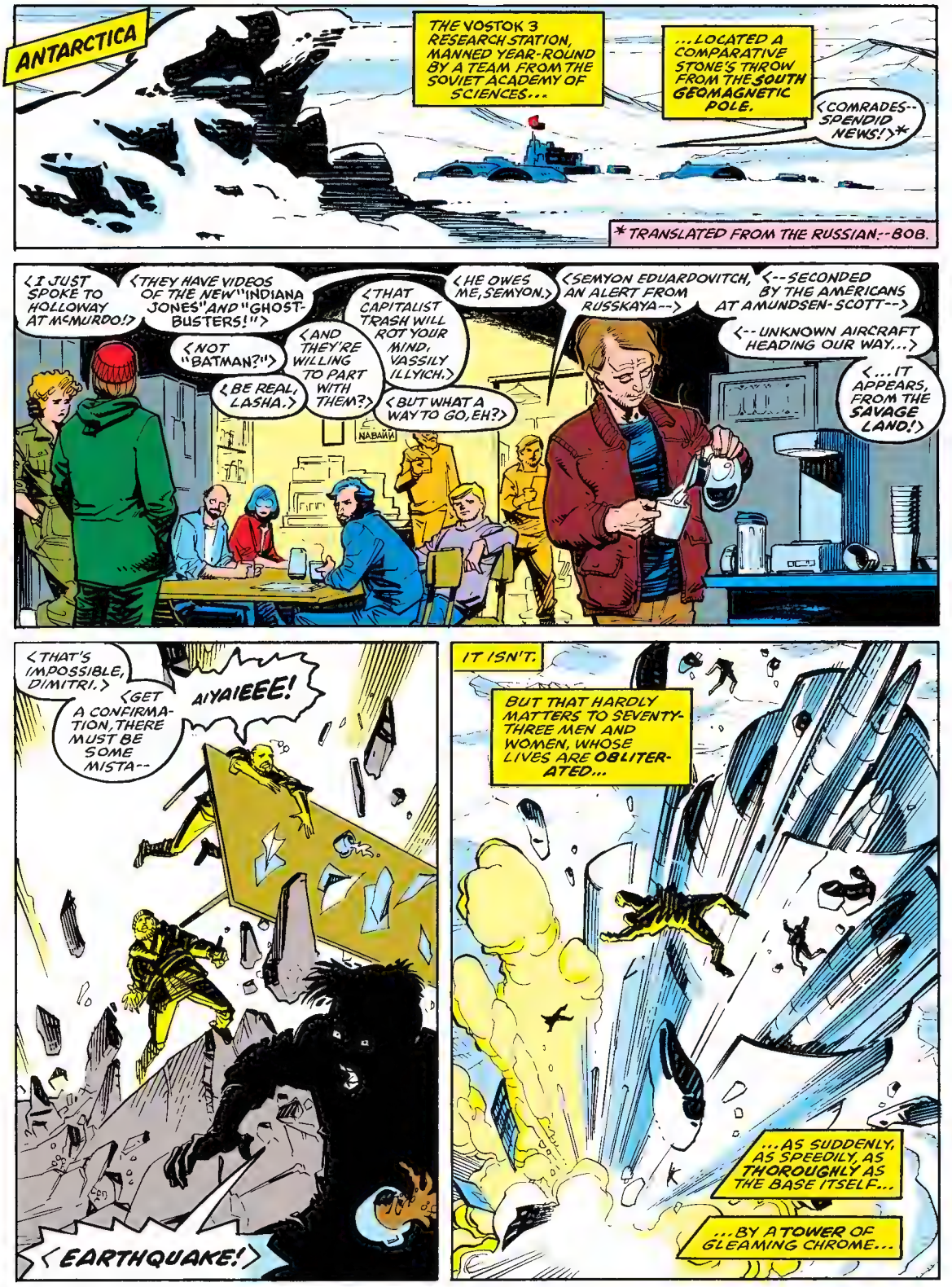
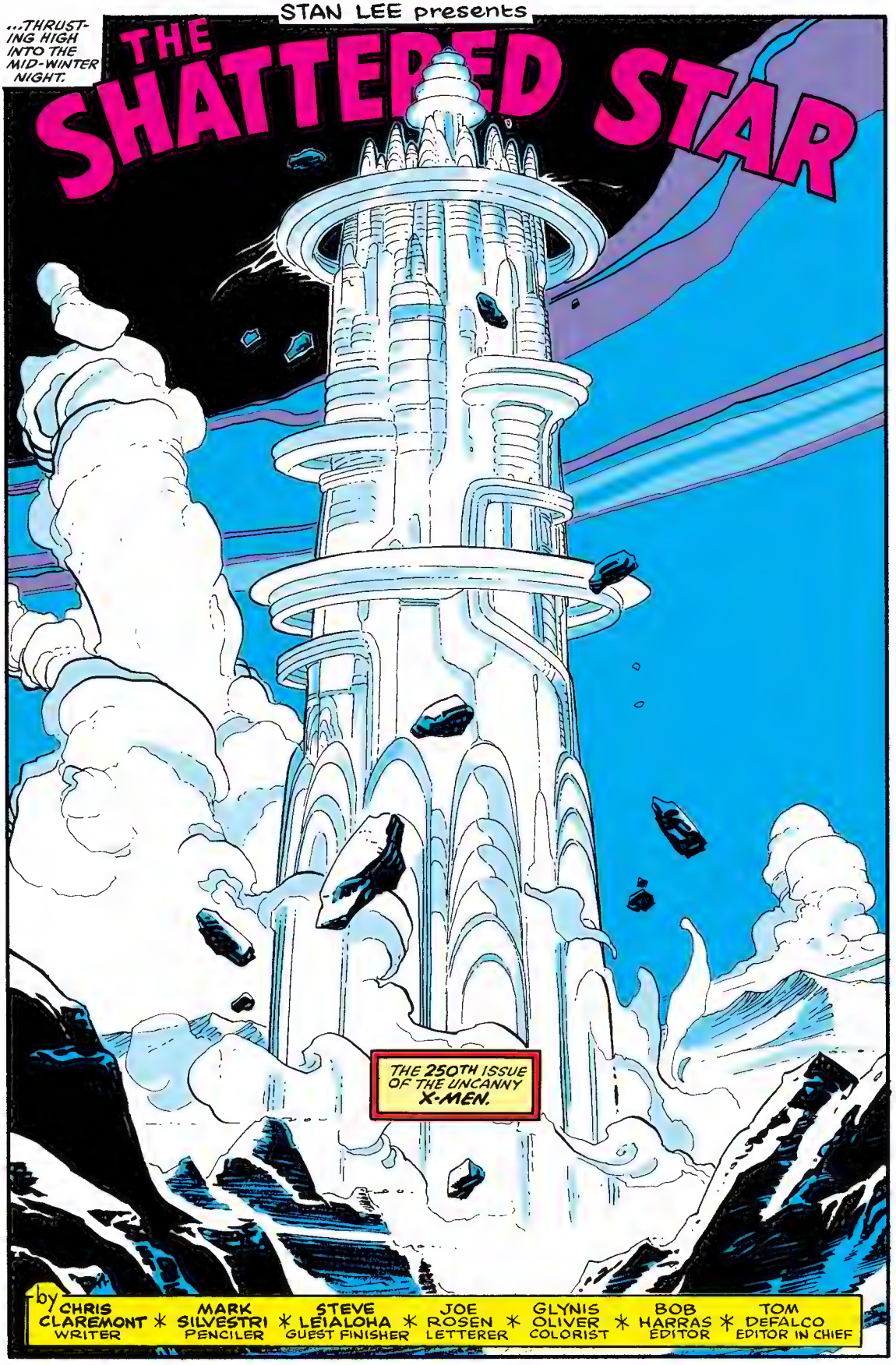
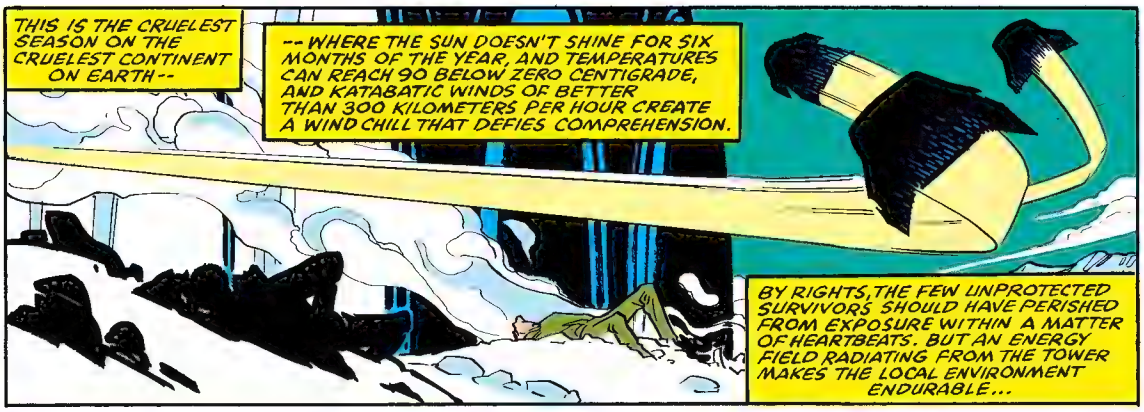
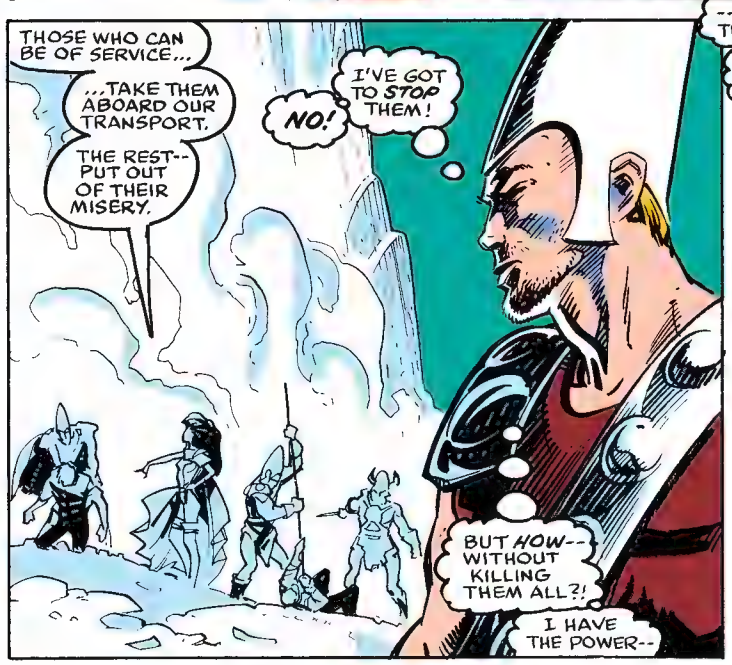

ANTARCTICA
THE VOSTOK 3 RESEARCH STATION, MANNED YEAR-ROUND BY A TEAM FROM THE SOVIET ACADEMY OF SCIENCES...
...LOCATED A COMPARATIVE STONE'S THROW FROM THE SOUTH GEOMAGNETIC POLE.
<COMRADES--SPENDID NEWS!>*
*TRANSLATED FROM THE RUSSIAN--BOB.
<I JUST SPOKE TO HOLLOWAY AT McMURDO!>
<THEY HAVE VIDEOS OF THE NEW "INDIANA JONES" AND "GHOST-BUSTERS!">
<NOT "BATMAN?!">
<BE REAL, LASHA.>
<AND THEY'RE WILLING TO PART WITH THEM?>
<THAT CAPITALIST TRASH WILL ROT YOUR MIND, VASSILY ILLYICH.>
<HE OWES ME, SEMYON.>
<BUT WHAT A WAY TO GO, EH?>
НАВАЙИ
<SEMYON EDUARDOVITCH, AN ALERT FROM RUSSKAYA-->
<--SECONDED BY THE AMERICANS AT AMUNDSEN-SCOTT-->
<--UNKNOWN AIRCRAFT HEADING OUR WAY...>
<...IT APPEARS, FROM THE SAVAGE LAND!>
<THAT'S IMPOSSIBLE, DIMITRI.>
<GET A CONFIRMATION, THERE MUST BE SOME MISTA--
AIYAIEEE!
<EARTHQUAKE!>
IT ISN'T.
BUT THAT HARDLY MATTERS TO SEVENTY-THREE MEN AND WOMEN, WHOSE LIVES ARE OBLITERATED...
...AS SUDDENLY, AS SPEEDILY, AS THOROUGHLY AS THE BASE ITSELF...
...BY A TOWER OF GLEAMING CHROME...


...THRUSTING HIGH INTO THE MID-WINTER NIGHT.
STAN LEE presents
THE SHATTERED STAR
THE 250TH ISSUE OF THE UNCANNY X-MEN.
by CHRIS CLAREMONT WRITER * MARK SILVESTRI PENCILER * STEVE LEIALOHA GUEST FINISHER * JOE ROSEN LETTERER * GLYNIS OLIVER COLORIST * BOB HARRAS EDITOR * TOM DEFALCO EDITOR IN CHIEF


THIS IS THE CRUELEST SEASON ON THE CRUELEST CONTINENT ON EARTH--
--WHERE THE SUN DOESN'T SHINE FOR SIX MONTHS OF THE YEAR, AND TEMPERATURES CAN REACH 90 BELOW ZERO CENTIGRADE, AND KATABATIC WINDS OF BETTER THAN 300 KILOMETERS PER HOUR CREATE A WIND CHILL THAT DEFIES COMPREHENSION.
BY RIGHTS, THE FEW UNPROTECTED SURVIVORS SHOULD HAVE PERISHED FROM EXPOSURE WITHIN A MATTER OF HEARTBEATS. BUT AN ENERGY FIELD RADIATING FROM THE TOWER MAKES THE LOCAL ENVIRONMENT ENDURABLE...

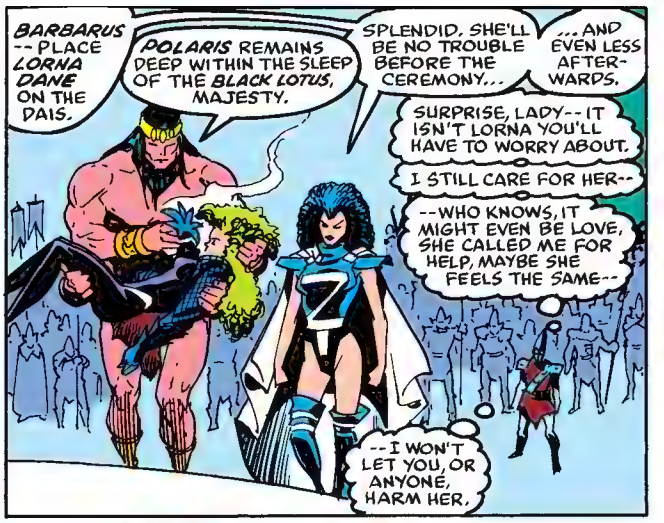
...AND THUS SPARES THEM, SADLY, FOR A FAR MORE TERRIBLE FATE TO COME.
IT'S MURDER--
-- THE SAME AS THE ATTACK ON PUNTA ARENAS.*
BUT WHY?!
WHERE'D THAT TOWER COME FROM?!!
WHAT'S ITS PURPOSE?!?
*LAST ISSUE.--BOB

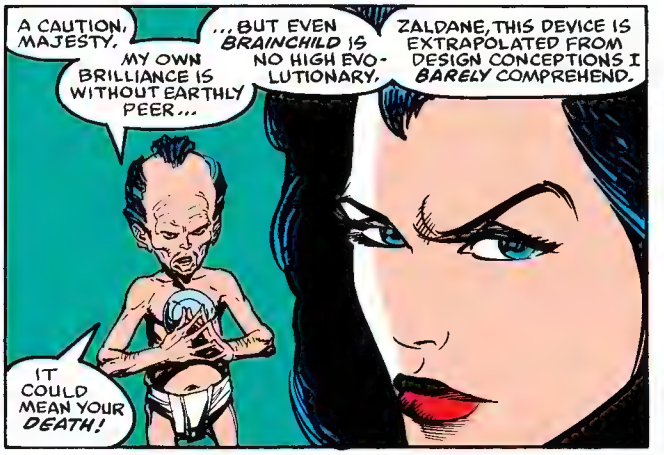
MAGNIFICENT!
A FITTING MONUMENT TO THE GLORY OF ZALADANE!
BUILT ON THE BLOOD AND BONES OF INNOCENT VICTIMS--
--YOU FIGURE THAT'S SOMETHING TO BE PROUD OF, LADY?
SOME AMONG THE OUT-LANDERS STILL LIVE, MAJESTY.

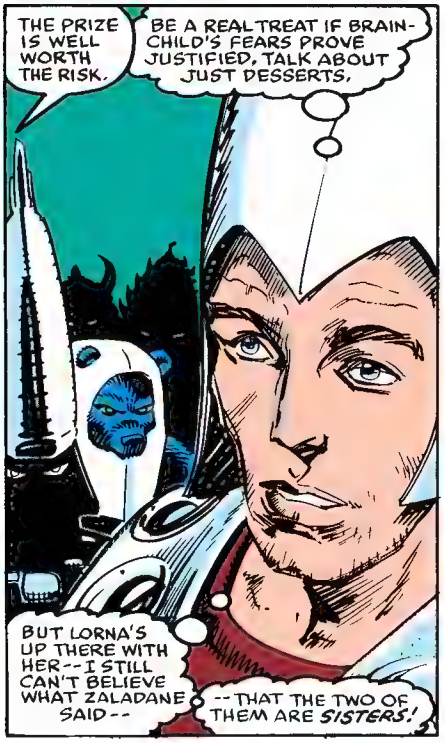

THOSE WHO CAN BE OF SERVICE...
...TAKE THEM ABOARD OUR TRANSPORT.
THE REST-- PUT OUT OF THEIR MISERY.
NO!
I'VE GOT TO STOP THEM!
BUT HOW-- WITHOUT KILLING THEM ALL?!
I HAVE THE POWER--

-- DO I HAVE THE STOMACH?
EVERYTHING'S HAPPENING SO FAST--
--CRIPES, JUST IN THE FEW SECONDS I WAS THINKING ABOUT IT, THEY FINISHED THE JOB.
MAYBE IT'S BETTER THIS WAY.
BIDE MY TIME --WATCH AND LEARN ALL I CAN...
...BEFORE I MAKE MY MOVE.

BEHOLD, MY BRAVOS--
--THE TRANS-MUTATOR!
PERHAPS THE GREATEST FRUIT TO SPRING FROM THE GENIUS OF THE HIGH EVOLUTIONARY.
MY KEY TO ULTIMATE POWER--
...AND VICTORY!


BARBARUS--PLACE LORNA DANE ON THE DAIS.
POLARIS REMAINS DEEP WITHIN THE SLEEP OF THE BLACK LOTUS, MAJESTY.
SPLENDID. SHE'LL BE NO TROUBLE BEFORE THE CEREMONY...
...AND EVEN LESS AFTER-WARDS.
SURPRISE, LADY--IT ISN'T LORNA YOU'LL HAVE TO WORRY ABOUT.
I STILL CARE FOR HER--
--WHO KNOWS, IT MIGHT EVEN BE LOVE. SHE CALLED ME FOR HELP, MAYBE SHE FEELS THE SAME--
--I WON'T LET YOU, OR ANYONE, HARM HER.

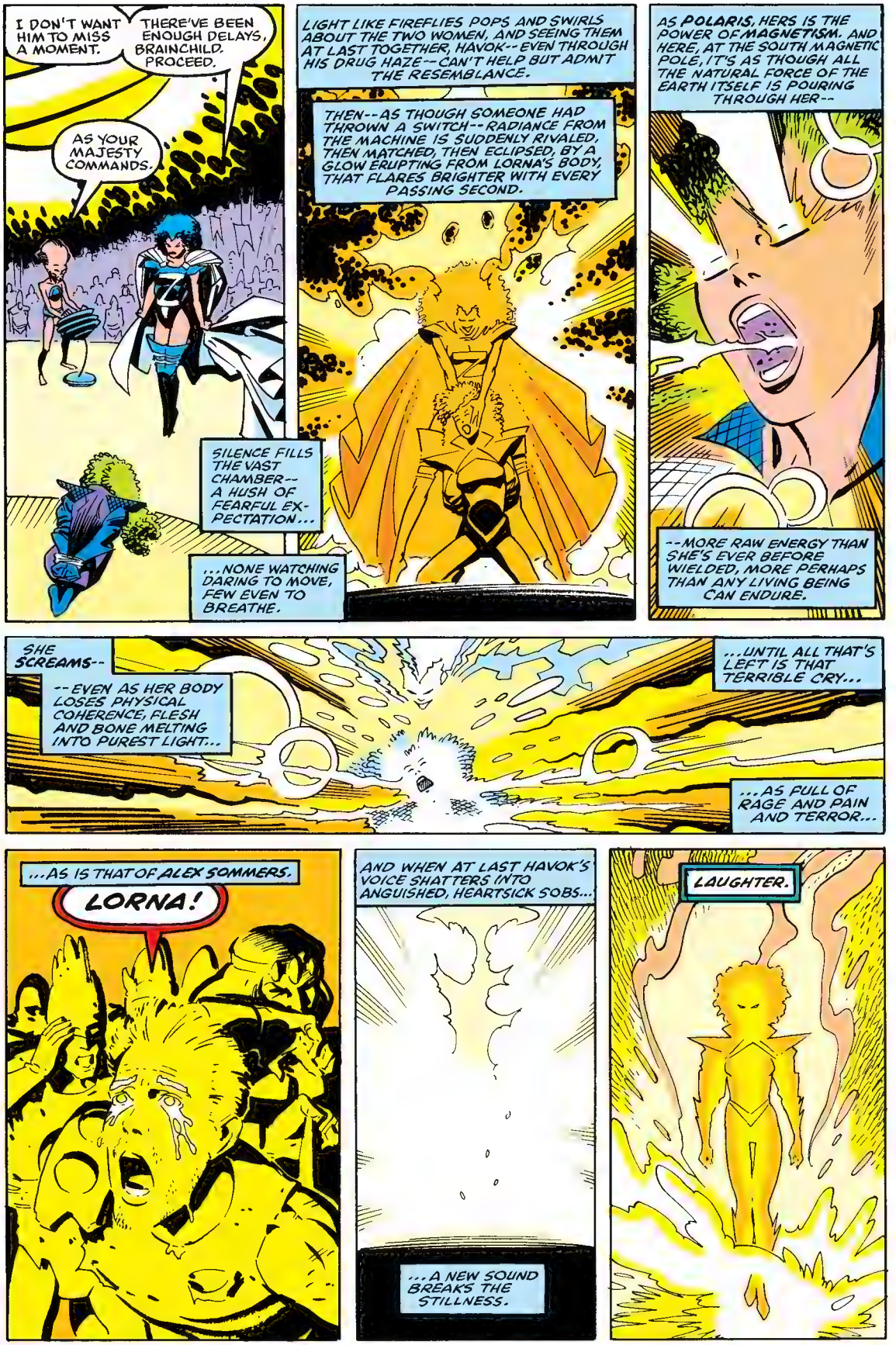

A CAUTION, MAJESTY.
MY OWN BRILLIANCE IS WITHOUT EARTHLY PEER...
...BUT EVEN BRAINCHILD IS NO HIGH EVO-LUTIONARY.
ZALDANE, THIS DEVICE IS EXTRAPOLATED FROM DESIGN CONCEPTIONS I BARELY COMPREHEND.
IT COULD MEAN YOUR DEATH!

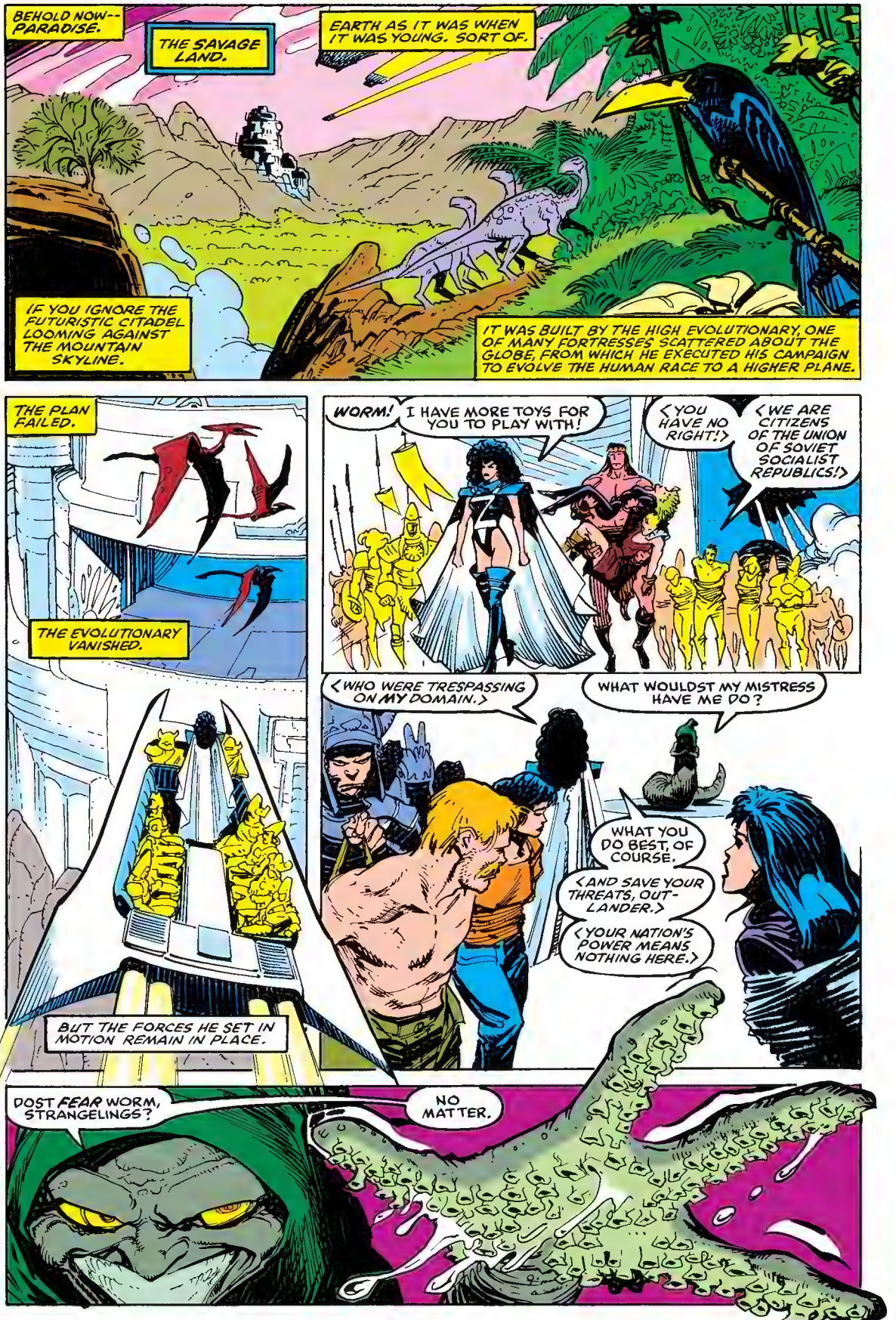

THE PRIZE IS WELL WORTH THE RISK.
BE A REAL TREAT IF BRAIN-CHILD'S FEARS PROVE JUSTIFIED, TALK ABOUT JUST DESSERTS.
BUT LORNA'S UP THERE WITH HER--I STILL CAN'T BELIEVE WHAT ZALADANE SAID--
--THAT THE TWO OF THEM ARE SISTERS!

TIME TO FISH OR CUT BAIT, HERO.
ONLY I DON'T HAVE THE EXCUSE OF BEING TAKEN BY SURPRISE.
IF I DON'T ACT, I'VE ONLY MYSELF TO BLAME.

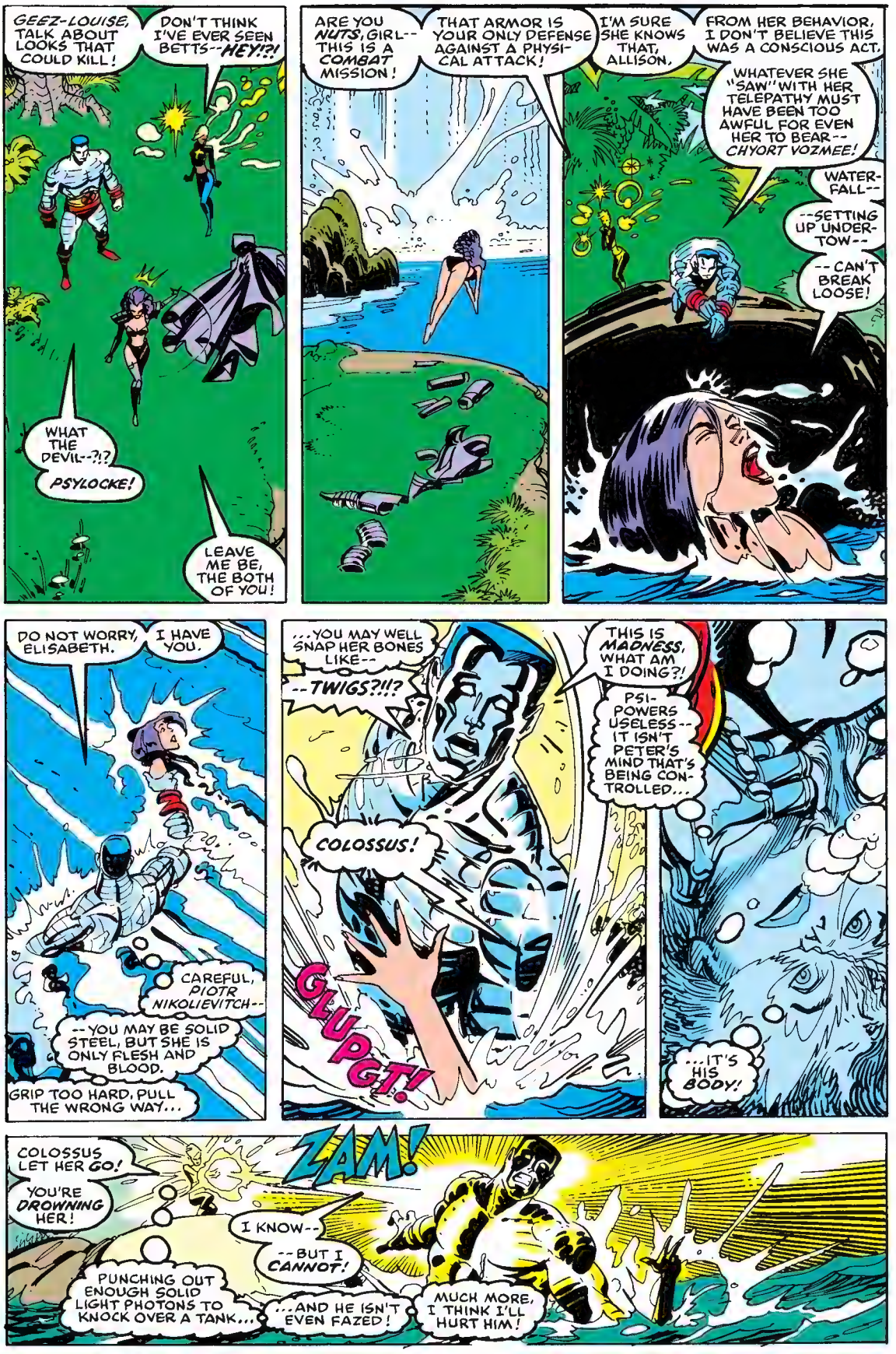
I GUESS THE OLD SAYING IS RIGHT AFTER ALL--
--ONCE YOU START, IT REALLY DOES GET EASIER.
ZALADANE!
AHHH, HAVOK--
--I WAS WONDERING, X-MAN, WHEN YOU'D REVEAL YOUR TRUE COLORS.

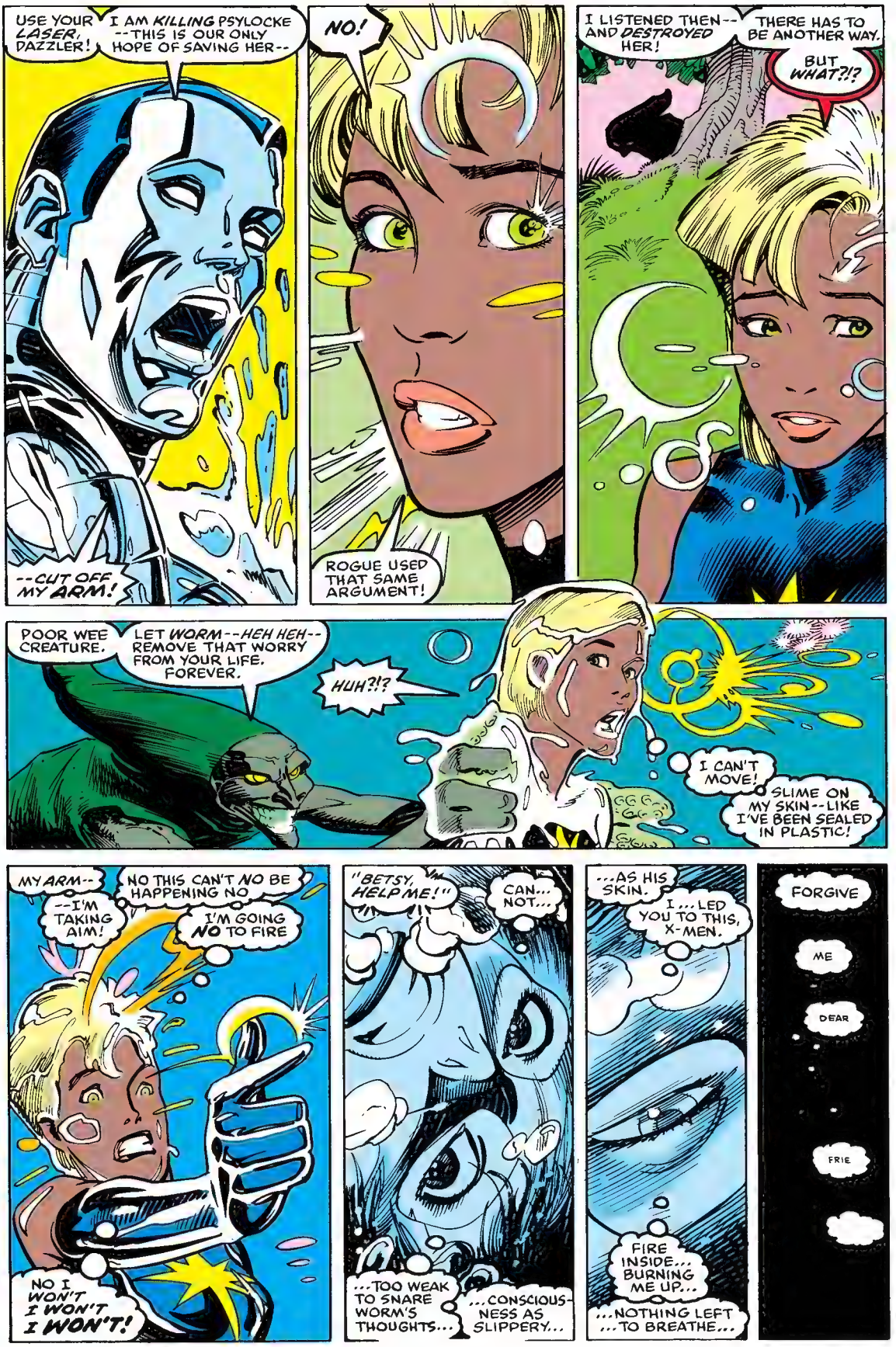
ARE YOU SUCH A FOOL, BOY...
WHUAOUWHLF!
KWUDD!
...AS TO THINK YOU COULD WALK AMONG US UNRECOGNIZED?
BLIND GAZA MARKED YOUR OUTLAND AURA...
...AND I, LUPO, YOUR ACCURSED SCENT!
--MY PROUD WARBIRDS!
FOR THAT, I'LL FEAST ON YOUR HEART!
NO, LUPO, I WANT HIM ALIVE!
YOU BUTCHERED MY BABIES--
BLOOD FOR BLOOD, THAT'S THE RULE!
LIFE FOR LIFE!
LITTLE TEDDY BEAR--
--ZALA-DANE SAID, NO.
DON'T CALL ME THAT, BARBARUS, NEVER CALL ME THAT!
AND LET ME GO, CURSE YOU!
NOT 'TIL YOU REMEMBER, "BEASTMASTER"!..
...THAT THE RULES ARE WHAT I MAKE THEM.
HE MUST PAY FOR WHAT HE'S DONE!
HE SHALL, LUPO. AND HIS FELLOW X-MEN WITH HIM.
BUT IN MY WAY.
AND AT MY PLEASURE.
THE BLACK LOTUS HAS DONE ITS WORK, MAJESTY.
BOY'S CONSCIOUS, BUT HE'LL BE NO MORE TROUBLE.
EXCELLENT, AMPHIBIUS.
PROVIDE HIM A RINGSIDE SEAT.

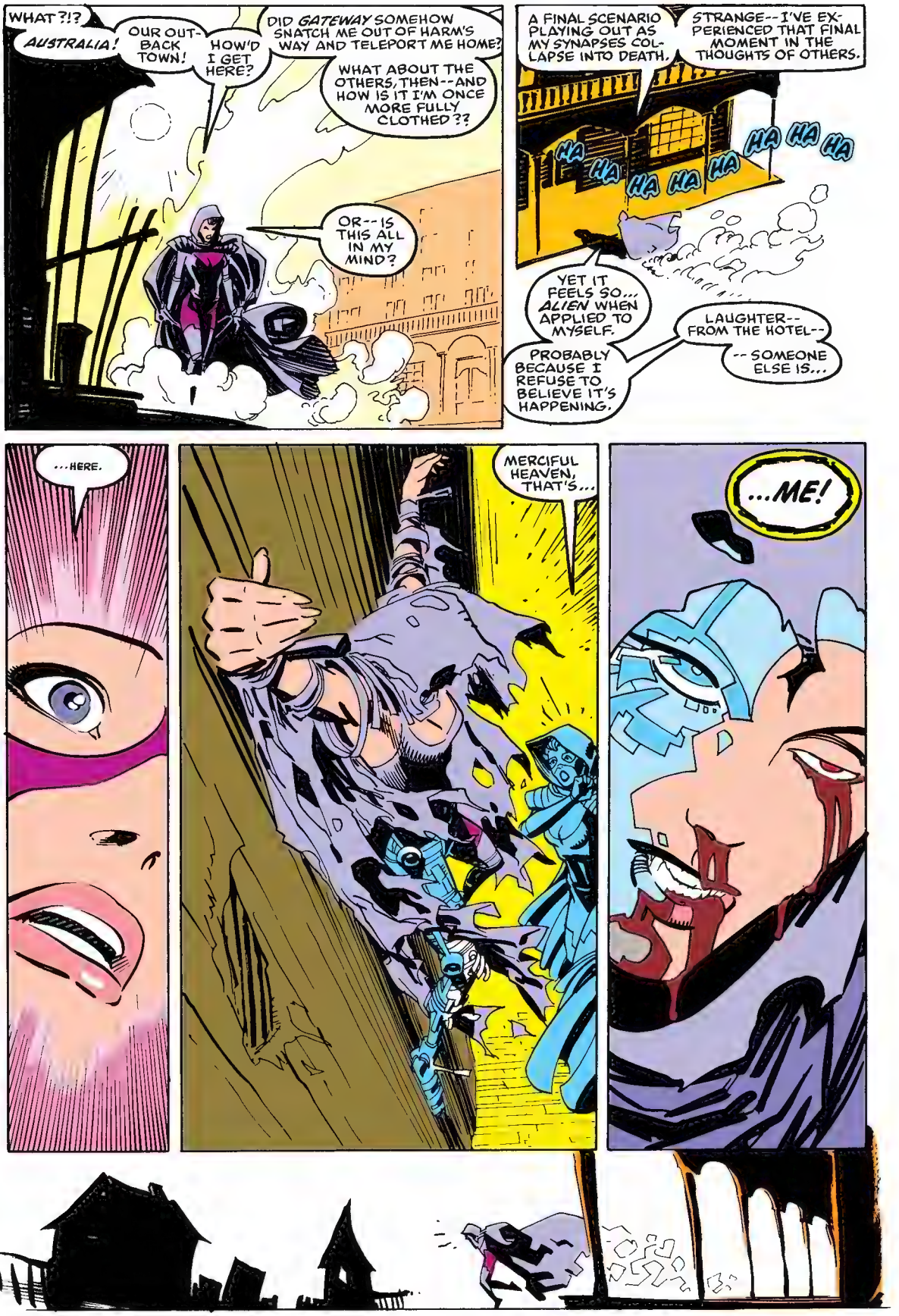

I DON'T WANT HIM TO MISS A MOMENT.
THERE'VE BEEN ENOUGH DELAYS, BRAINCHILD. PROCEED.
AS YOUR MAJESTY COMMANDS.
SILENCE FILLS THE VAST CHAMBER--A HUSH OF FEARFUL EXPECTATION...
...NONE WATCHING DARING TO MOVE, FEW EVEN TO BREATHE.
LIGHT LIKE FIREFLIES POPS AND SWIRLS ABOUT THE TWO WOMEN, AND SEEING THEM AT LAST TOGETHER, HAVOK--EVEN THROUGH HIS DRUG HAZE--CAN'T HELP BUT ADMIT THE RESEMBLANCE.
THEN--AS THOUGH SOMEONE HAD THROWN A SWITCH--RADIANCE FROM THE MACHINE IS SUDDENLY RIVALED, THEN MATCHED, THEN ECLIPSED, BY A GLOW ERUPTING FROM LORNA'S BODY, THAT FLARES BRIGHTER WITH EVERY PASSING SECOND.
AS POLARIS, HERS IS THE POWER OF MAGNETISM. AND HERE, AT THE SOUTH MAGNETIC POLE, IT'S AS THOUGH ALL THE NATURAL FORCE OF THE EARTH ITSELF IS POURING THROUGH HER--
--MORE RAW ENERGY THAN SHE'S EVER BEFORE WIELDED, MORE PERHAPS THAN ANY LIVING BEING CAN ENDURE.
SHE SCREAMS--
--EVEN AS HER BODY LOSES PHYSICAL COHERENCE, FLESH AND BONE MELTING INTO PUREST LIGHT...
...UNTIL ALL THAT'S LEFT IS THAT TERRIBLE CRY...
...AS FULL OF RAGE AND PAIN AND TERROR...
...AS IS THAT OF ALEX SOMMERS.
LORNA!
AND WHEN AT LAST HAVOK'S VOICE SHATTERS INTO ANGUISHED, HEARTSICK SOBS...
...A NEW SOUND BREAKS THE STILLNESS.
LAUGHTER.

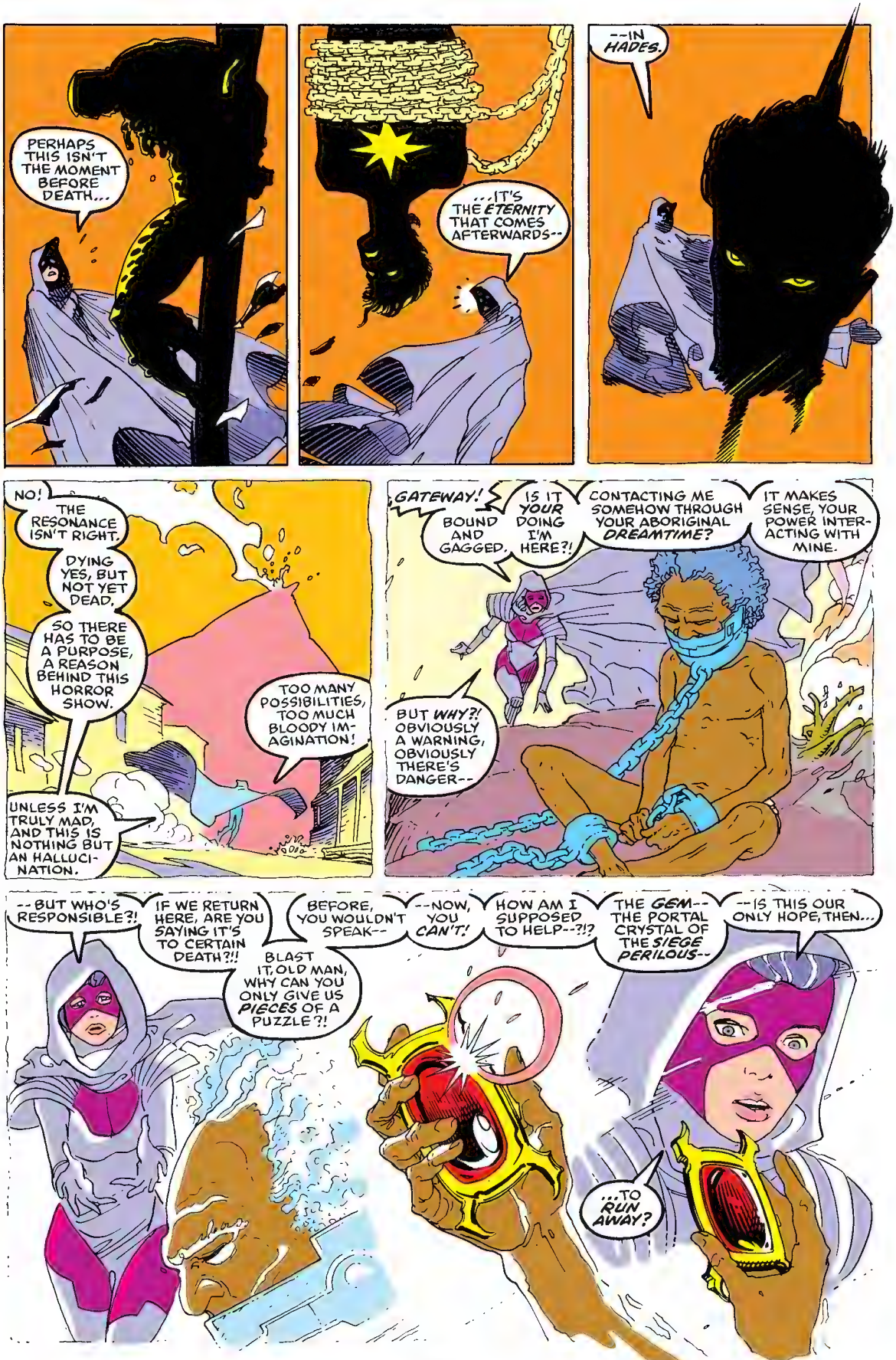

BEHOLD NOW--PARADISE.
THE SAVAGE LAND.
EARTH AS IT WAS WHEN IT WAS YOUNG. SORT OF.
IF YOU IGNORE THE FUTURISTIC CITADEL LOOMING AGAINST THE MOUNTAIN SKYLINE.
IT WAS BUILT BY THE HIGH EVOLUTIONARY, ONE OF MANY FORTRESSES SCATTERED ABOUT THE GLOBE, FROM WHICH HE EXECUTED HIS CAMPAIGN TO EVOLVE THE HUMAN RACE TO A HIGHER PLANE.
THE PLAN FAILED.
THE EVOLUTIONARY VANISHED.
BUT THE FORCES HE SET IN MOTION REMAIN IN PLACE.
WORM! I HAVE MORE TOYS FOR YOU TO PLAY WITH!
<YOU HAVE NO RIGHT!>
<WE ARE CITIZENS OF THE UNION OF SOVIET SOCIALIST REPUBLICS!>
<WHO WERE TRESPASSING ON MY DOMAIN.>
WHAT WOULDST MY MISTRESS HAVE ME DO?
WHAT YOU DO BEST, OF COURSE.
<AND SAVE YOUR THREATS, OUT-LANDER.>
<YOUR NATION'S POWER MEANS NOTHING HERE.>
DOST FEAR WORM, STRANGELINGS?
NO MATTER.

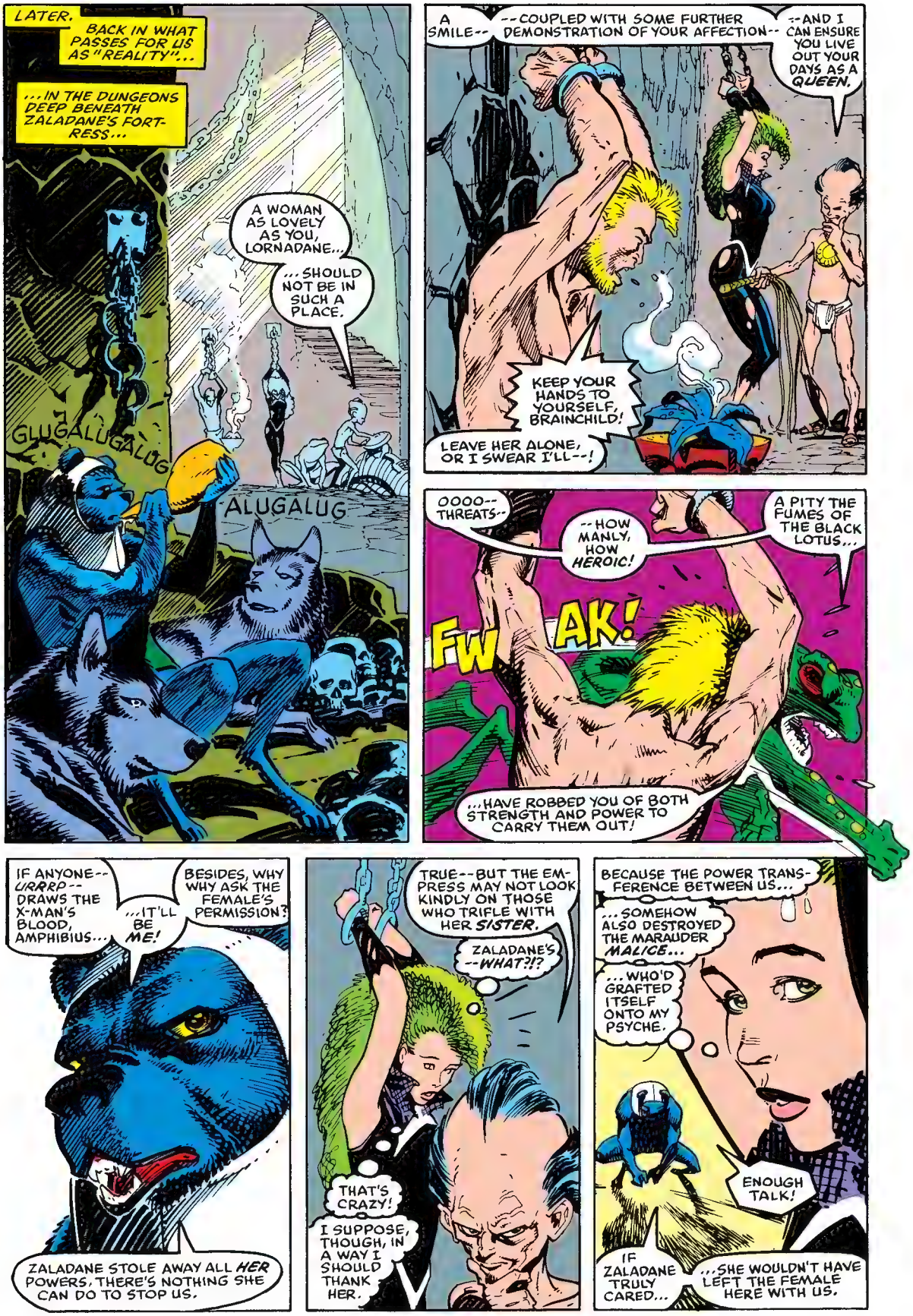
FOR ONCE I'VE--HEH HEH--"WORMED" MY WAY THROUGH THE FLESHLY CASEMENT OF THY BODY...
...INTO THY MIND AND SOUL...
<NO--PLEASE, NO!>
...THE MOST GLORIOUS ENTERPRISE OF THY LIVES...
...WILL BE--HEH HEH--TO SERVE ZALADANE.
BOSZHE MO!--
<--SOME FORM OF MUCOID FILM, COVERING VASSILY FROM TOP TO TOE!>
GIVING ME CONTROL--COMPLETE AND ABSOLUTE--
--OVER THE--HEH HEH--BODY.
IN TIME, HOWEVER, HE WILL DO WILLINGLY, EAGERLY...
...WHAT MUST NOW BE FORCED.
AS, MY DEARS, SHALL YOU.
<LASHA, FORGIVE ME!>
<I'M TRYING--HARD AS I CAN-->
<--TO RESIST!>
BRING HER TO ME.
THEN THE PAIR OF YOU CAN DELIVER THY FRIEND...
"...TO WORM'S LOVING EMBRACE."
ANY SIGN OF HAVOK'S THOUGHTS?
WHAT'S GOING ON UP THERE, PSYLOCKE?
TRUST ME, DAZZLER--
--YOU DON'T EVER WANT TO KNOW!

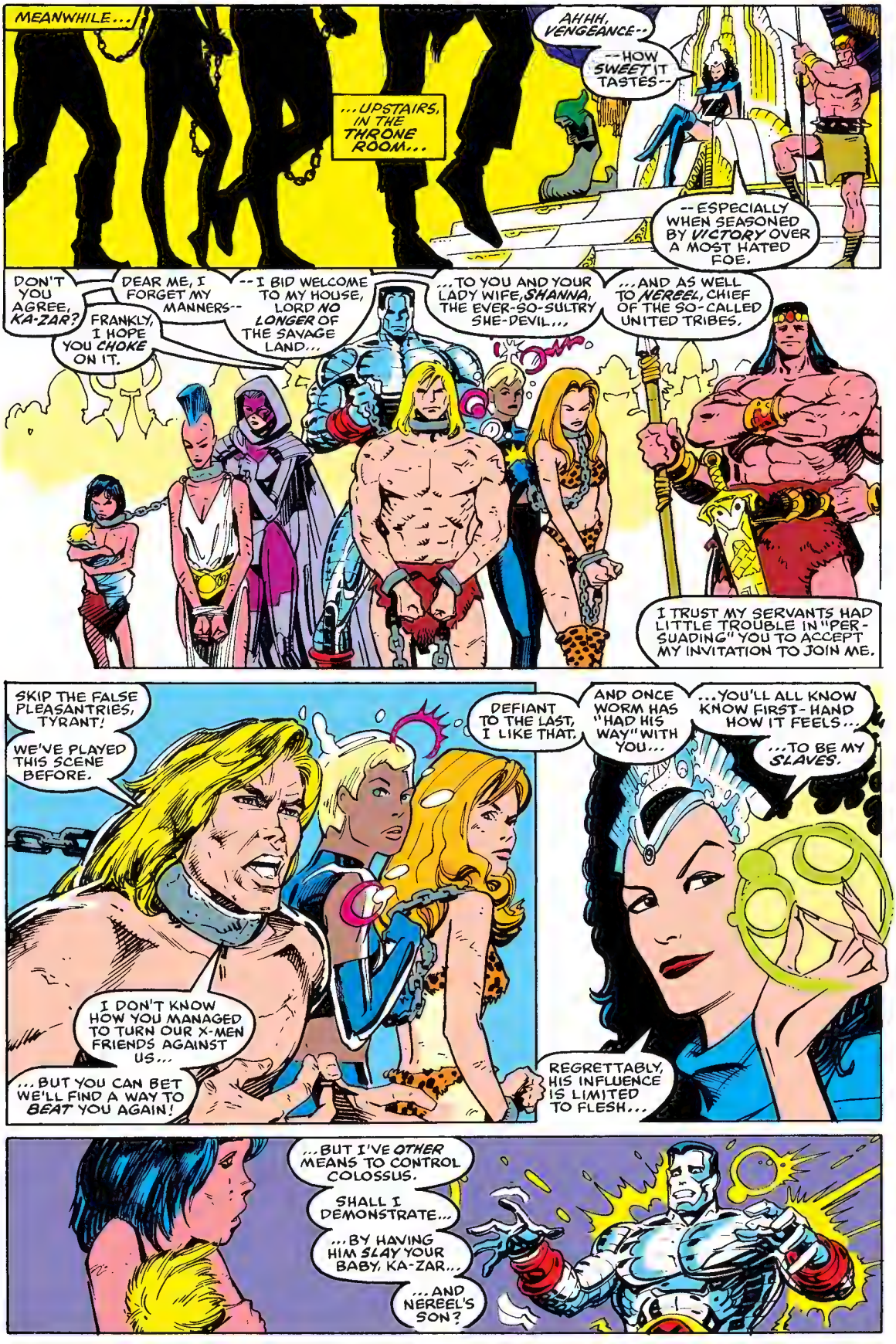

GEEZ-LOUISE, TALK ABOUT LOOKS THAT COULD KILL!
DON'T THINK I'VE EVER SEEN BETTS--HEY!?!
WHAT THE DEVIL--?!?
PSYLOCKE!
LEAVE ME BE, THE BOTH OF YOU!
ARE YOU NUTS, GIRL-- THIS IS A COMBAT MISSION!
THAT ARMOR IS YOUR ONLY DEFENSE AGAINST A PHYSICAL ATTACK!
I'M SURE SHE KNOWS THAT, ALLISON.
FROM HER BEHAVIOR, I DON'T BELIEVE THIS WAS A CONSCIOUS ACT.
WHATEVER SHE "SAW" WITH HER TELEPATHY MUST HAVE BEEN TOO AWFUL FOR EVEN HER TO BEAR-- CHYORT VOZMEE!
WATER-FALL--
--SETTING UP UNDER-TOW--
--CAN'T BREAK LOOSE!
DO NOT WORRY, ELISABETH.
I HAVE YOU.
CAREFUL, PIOTR NIKOLIEVITCH--
--YOU MAY BE SOLID STEEL, BUT SHE IS ONLY FLESH AND BLOOD.
GRIP TOO HARD, PULL THE WRONG WAY...
...YOU MAY WELL SNAP HER BONES LIKE--
--TWIGS?!!?
COLOSSUS!
GLUPGT!
THIS IS MADNESS, WHAT AM I DOING?!
PSI-POWERS USELESS-- IT ISN'T PETER'S MIND THAT'S BEING CONTROLLED...
...IT'S HIS BODY!
COLOSSUS LET HER GO!
YOU'RE DROWNING HER!
I KNOW--
--BUT I CANNOT!
ZAM!
PUNCHING OUT ENOUGH SOLID LIGHT PHOTONS TO KNOCK OVER A TANK...
...AND HE ISN'T EVEN FAZED!
MUCH MORE, I THINK I'LL HURT HIM!

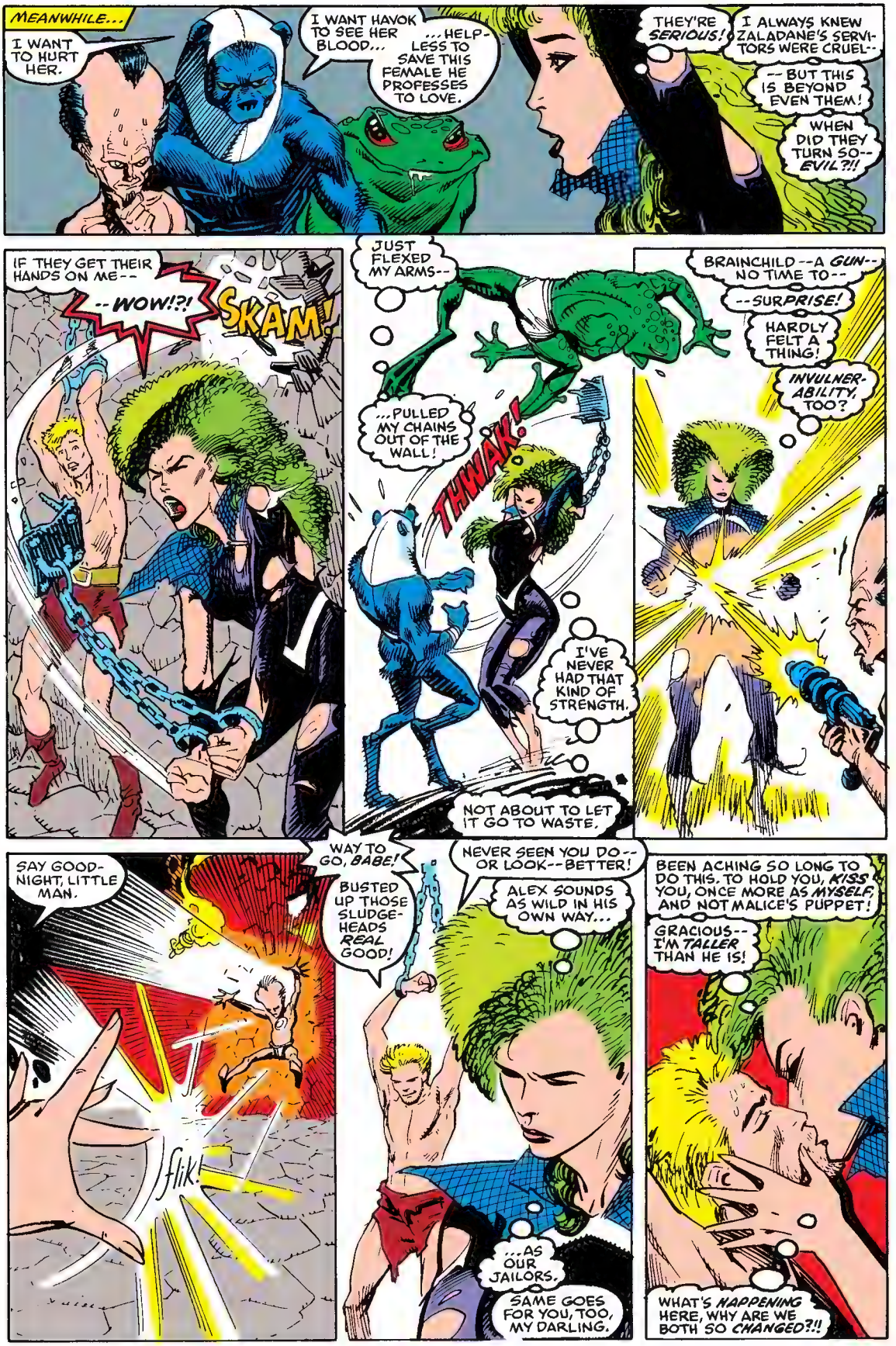

USE YOUR LASER, DAZZLER!
I AM KILLING PSYLOCKE --THIS IS OUR ONLY HOPE OF SAVING HER--
--CUT OFF MY ARM!
NO!
ROGUE USED THAT SAME ARGUMENT!
I LISTENED THEN-- AND DESTROYED HER!
THERE HAS TO BE ANOTHER WAY.
BUT WHAT?!?
POOR WEE CREATURE.
LET WORM--HEH HEH-- REMOVE THAT WORRY FROM YOUR LIFE. FOREVER.
HUH?!?
I CAN'T MOVE!
SLIME ON MY SKIN--LIKE I'VE BEEN SEALED IN PLASTIC!
MY ARM--
--I'M TAKING AIM!
NO THIS CAN'T NO BE HAPPENING NO
I'M GOING NO TO FIRE
NO I WON'T I WON'T I WON'T!
"BETSY, HELP ME!"
CAN... NOT...
...TOO WEAK TO SNARE WORM'S THOUGHTS...
...CONSCIOUS-NESS AS SLIPPERY...
...AS HIS SKIN.
I...LED YOU TO THIS, X-MEN.
FIRE INSIDE... BURNING ME UP...
...NOTHING LEFT ...TO BREATHE...
FORGIVE
ME
DEAR
FRIE

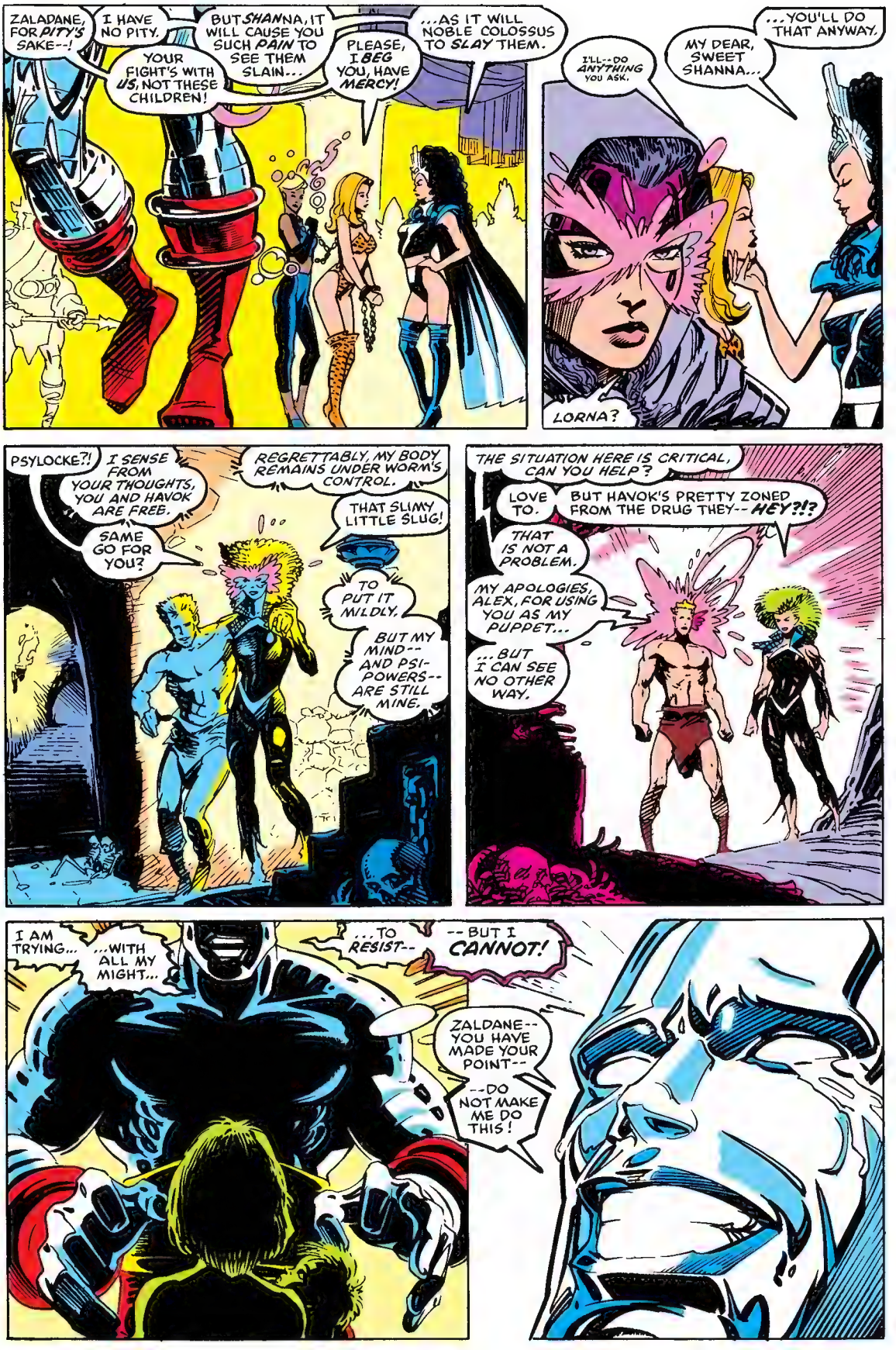

WHAT?!?
AUSTRALIA!
OUR OUT-BACK TOWN!
HOW'D I GET HERE?
DID GATEWAY SOMEHOW SNATCH ME OUT OF HARM'S WAY AND TELEPORT ME HOME?
WHAT ABOUT THE OTHERS, THEN--AND HOW IS IT I'M ONCE MORE FULLY CLOTHED??
OR--IS THIS ALL IN MY MIND?
A FINAL SCENARIO PLAYING OUT AS MY SYNAPSES COLLAPSE INTO DEATH.
STRANGE--I'VE EXPERIENCED THAT FINAL MOMENT IN THE THOUGHTS OF OTHERS.
HA HA HA HA HA HA HA HA
YET IT FEELS SO... ALIEN WHEN APPLIED TO MYSELF.
PROBABLY BECAUSE I REFUSE TO BELIEVE IT'S HAPPENING.
LAUGHTER--FROM THE HOTEL--
--SOMEONE ELSE IS...
...HERE.
MERCIFUL HEAVEN, THAT'S...
...ME!


PERHAPS THIS ISN'T THE MOMENT BEFORE DEATH...
...IT'S THE ETERNITY THAT COMES AFTERWARDS--
--IN HADES.
NO! THE RESONANCE ISN'T RIGHT.
DYING YES, BUT NOT YET DEAD.
SO THERE HAS TO BE A PURPOSE, A REASON BEHIND THIS HORROR SHOW.
TOO MANY POSSIBILITIES, TOO MUCH BLOODY IMAGINATION!
UNLESS I'M TRULY MAD, AND THIS IS NOTHING BUT AN HALLUCINATION.
GATEWAY! BOUND AND GAGGED.
IS IT YOUR DOING I'M HERE?!
CONTACTING ME SOMEHOW THROUGH YOUR ABORIGINAL DREAMTIME?
IT MAKES SENSE, YOUR POWER INTERACTING WITH MINE.
BUT WHY?! OBVIOUSLY A WARNING, OBVIOUSLY THERE'S DANGER--
--BUT WHO'S RESPONSIBLE?!
IF WE RETURN HERE, ARE YOU SAYING IT'S TO CERTAIN DEATH?!!
BLAST IT, OLD MAN, WHY CAN YOU ONLY GIVE US PIECES OF A PUZZLE?!
BEFORE, YOU WOULDN'T SPEAK--
--NOW, YOU CAN'T!
HOW AM I SUPPOSED TO HELP--?!?
THE GEM--THE PORTAL CRYSTAL OF THE SIEGE PERILOUS--
--IS THIS OUR ONLY HOPE, THEN...
..TO RUN AWAY?

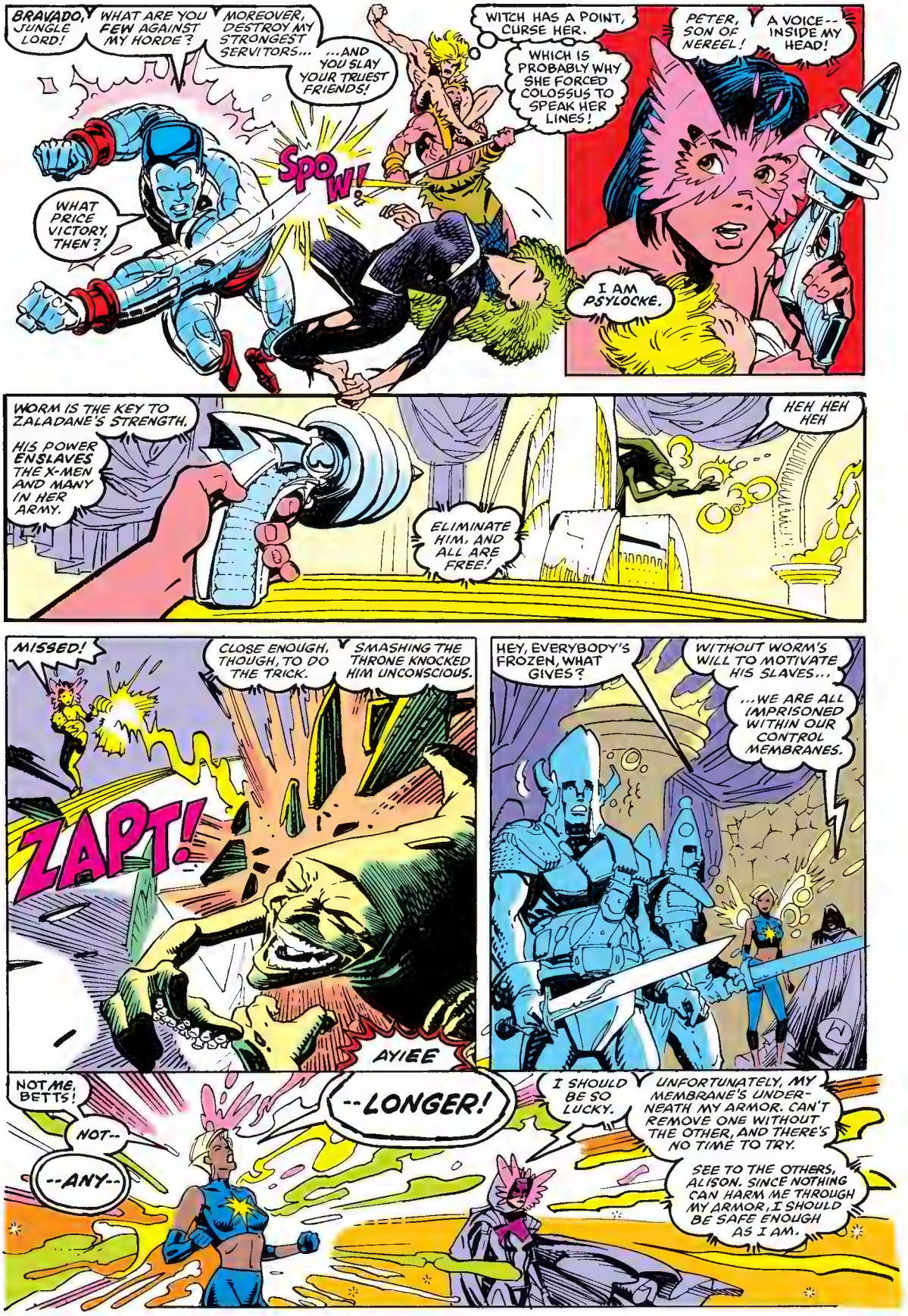

LATER.
BACK IN WHAT PASSES FOR US AS "REALITY"...
...IN THE DUNGEONS DEEP BENEATH ZALADANE'S FORTRESS...
A WOMAN AS LOVELY AS YOU, LORNADANE...
...SHOULD NOT BE IN SUCH A PLACE.
GLUGALUGALUG
ALUGALUG
A SMILE--
--COUPLED WITH SOME FURTHER DEMONSTRATION OF YOUR AFFECTION--
--AND I CAN ENSURE YOU LIVE OUT YOUR DAYS AS A QUEEN.
KEEP YOUR HANDS TO YOURSELF, BRAINCHILD!
LEAVE HER ALONE, OR I SWEAR I'LL--!
OOOO--THREATS--
--HOW MANLY, HOW HEROIC!
A PITY THE FUMES OF THE BLACK LOTUS...
FW
AK!
...HAVE ROBBED YOU OF BOTH STRENGTH AND POWER TO CARRY THEM OUT!
IF ANYONE--URRRO--DRAWS THE X-MAN'S BLOOD, AMPHIBIUS...
...IT'LL BE ME!
BESIDES, WHY WHY ASK THE FEMALE'S PERMISSION?
ZALADANE STOLE AWAY ALL HER POWERS. THERE'S NOTHING SHE CAN DO TO STOP US.
TRUE--BUT THE EMPRESS MAY NOT LOOK KINDLY ON THOSE WHO TRIFLE WITH HER SISTER.
ZALADANE'S --WHAT?!?
THAT'S CRAZY!
I SUPPOSE, THOUGH, IN A WAY I SHOULD THANK HER.
BECAUSE THE POWER TRANSFERENCE BETWEEN US...
...SOMEHOW ALSO DESTROYED THE MARAUDER MALICE...
...WHO'D GRAFTED ITSELF ONTO MY PSYCHE.
ENOUGH TALK!
IF ZALADANE TRULY CARED...
...SHE WOULDN'T HAVE LEFT THE FEMALE HERE WITH US.

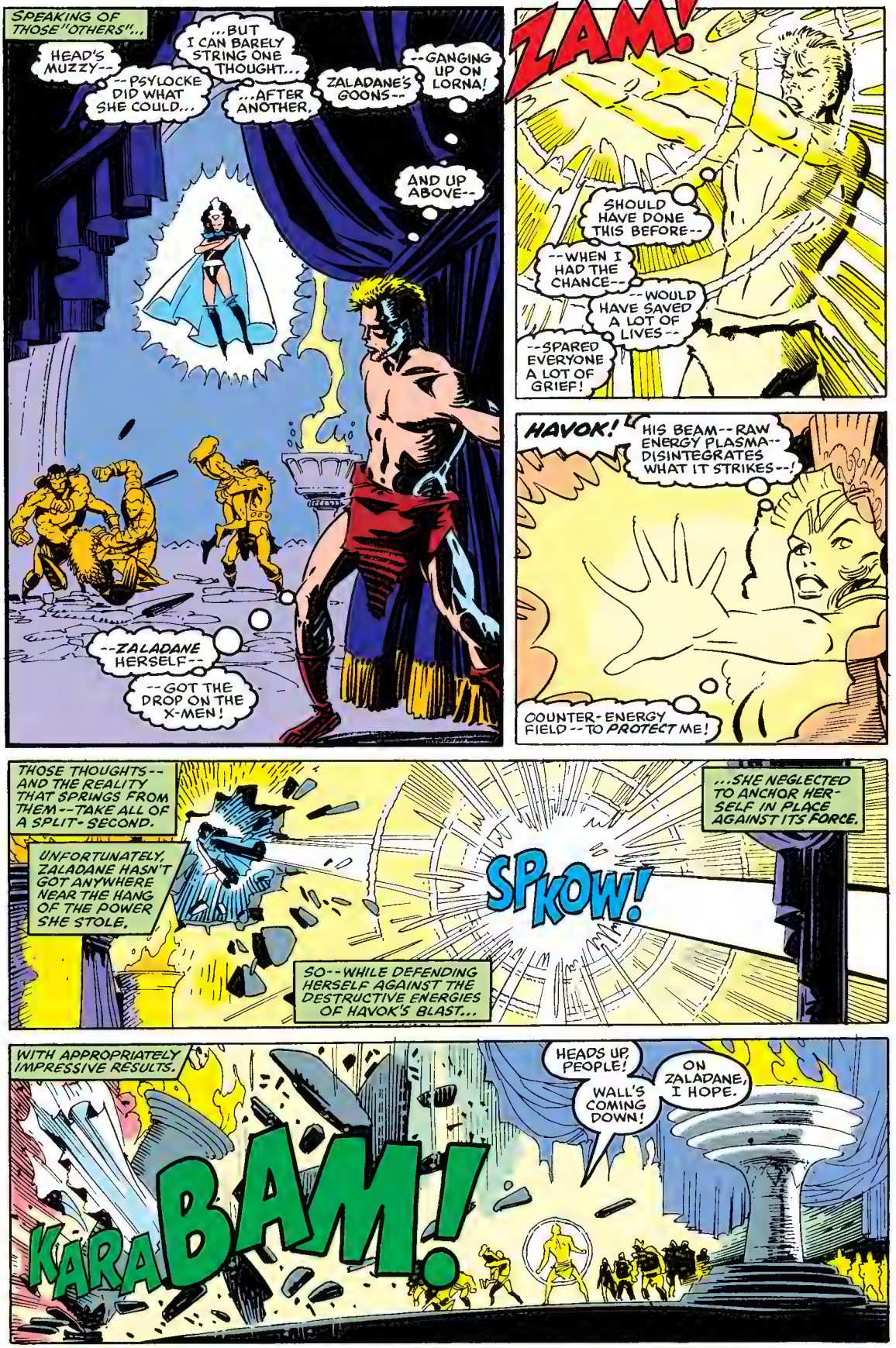

MEANWHILE...
...UPSTAIRS, IN THE THRONE ROOM...
AHHH, VENGEANCE--
--HOW SWEET IT TASTES--
--ESPECIALLY WHEN SEASONED BY VICTORY OVER A MOST HATED FOE.
DON'T YOU AGREE, KA-ZAR?
FRANKLY, I HOPE YOU CHOKE ON IT.
DEAR ME, I FORGET MY MANNERS--
--I BID WELCOME TO MY HOUSE, LORD NO LONGER OF THE SAVAGE LAND...
...TO YOU AND YOUR LADY WIFE, SHANNA, THE EVER-SO-SULTRY SHE-DEVIL...
...AND AS WELL TO NEREEL, CHIEF OF THE SO-CALLED UNITED TRIBES.
I TRUST MY SERVANTS HAD LITTLE TROUBLE IN "PERSUADING" YOU TO ACCEPT MY INVITATION TO JOIN ME.
SKIP THE FALSE PLEASANTRIES, TYRANT!
WE'VE PLAYED THIS SCENE BEFORE.
I DON'T KNOW HOW YOU MANAGED TO TURN OUR X-MEN FRIENDS AGAINST US...
...BUT YOU CAN BET WE'LL FIND A WAY TO BEAT YOU AGAIN!
DEFIANT TO THE LAST, I LIKE THAT.
AND ONCE WORM HAS "HAD HIS WAY" WITH YOU...
...YOU'LL ALL KNOW KNOW FIRST-HAND HOW IT FEELS...
...TO BE MY SLAVES.
REGRETTABLY, HIS INFLUENCE IS LIMITED TO FLESH...
...BUT I'VE OTHER MEANS TO CONTROL COLOSSUS.
SHALL I DEMONSTRATE...
...BY HAVING HIM SLAY YOUR BABY, KA-ZAR...
...AND NEREEL'S SON?

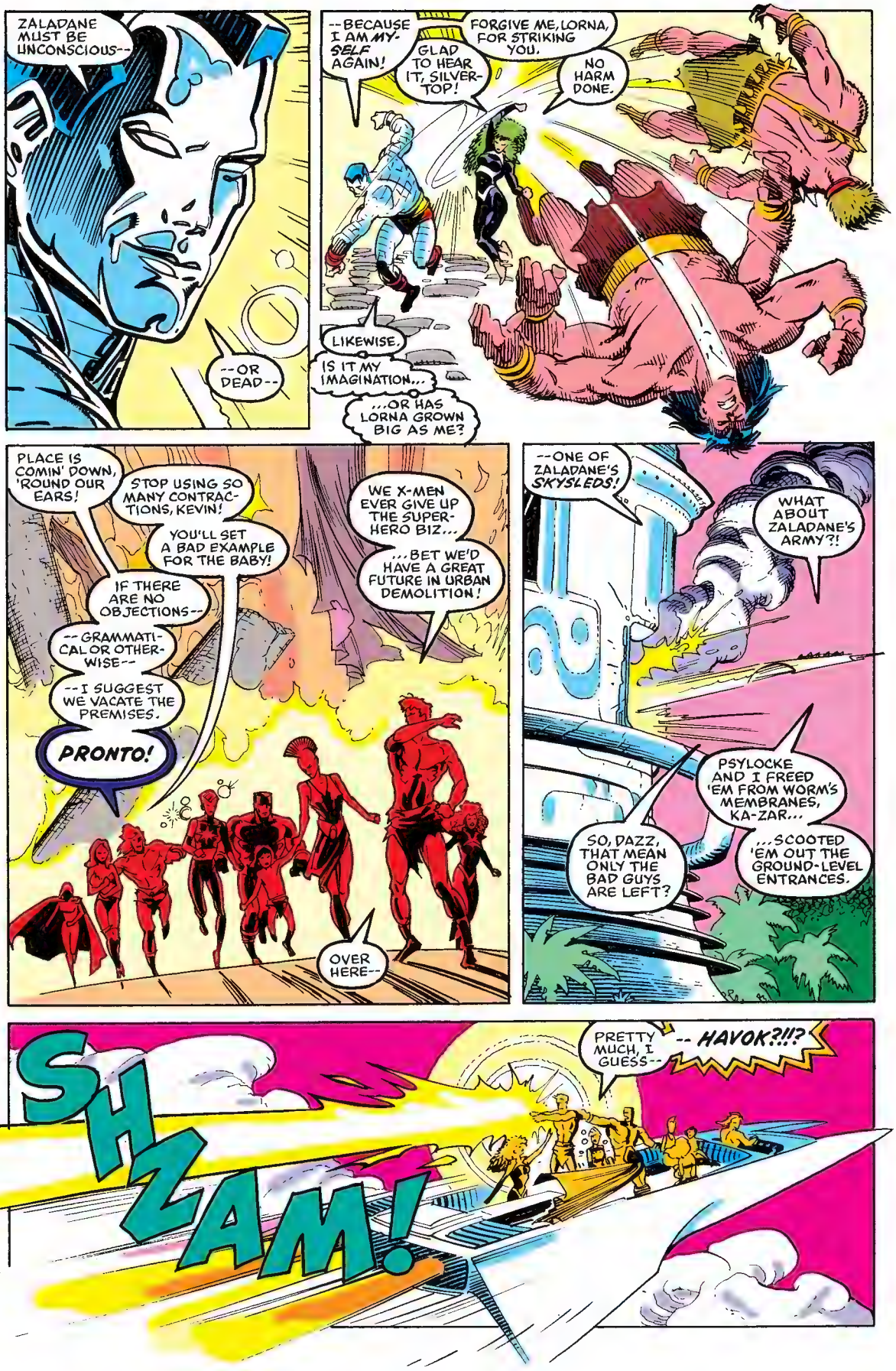

MEANWHILE...
I WANT TO HURT HER.
I WANT HAVOK TO SEE HER BLOOD...
...HELPLESS TO SAVE THIS FEMALE HE PROFESSES TO LOVE.
THEY'RE SERIOUS!
I ALWAYS KNEW ZALADANE'S SERVITORS WERE CRUEL--
--BUT THIS IS BEYOND EVEN THEM!
WHEN DID THEY TURN SO--EVIL?!!
IF THEY GET THEIR HANDS ON ME--
--WOW!?!
SKAM!
JUST FLEXED MY ARMS--
...PULLED MY CHAINS OUT OF THE WALL!
THWAK!
I'VE NEVER HAD THAT KIND OF STRENGTH.
NOT ABOUT TO LET IT GO TO WASTE.
BRAINCHILD--A GUN--NO TIME TO--
--SURPRISE!
HARDLY FELT A THING!
INVULNERABILITY, TOO?
SAY GOODNIGHT, LITTLE MAN.
flik!
WAY TO GO, BABE! BUSTED UP THOSE SLUDGEHEADS REAL GOOD!
NEVER SEEN YOU DO--OR LOOK--BETTER!
ALEX SOUNDS AS WILD IN HIS OWN WAY...
...AS OUR JAILORS.
SAME GOES FOR YOU, TOO, MY DARLING.
BEEN ACHING SO LONG TO DO THIS. TO HOLD YOU, KISS YOU, ONCE MORE AS MYSELF, AND NOT MALICE'S PUPPET!
GRACIOUS--I'M TALLER THAN HE IS!
WHAT'S HAPPENING HERE, WHY ARE WE BOTH SO CHANGED?!!

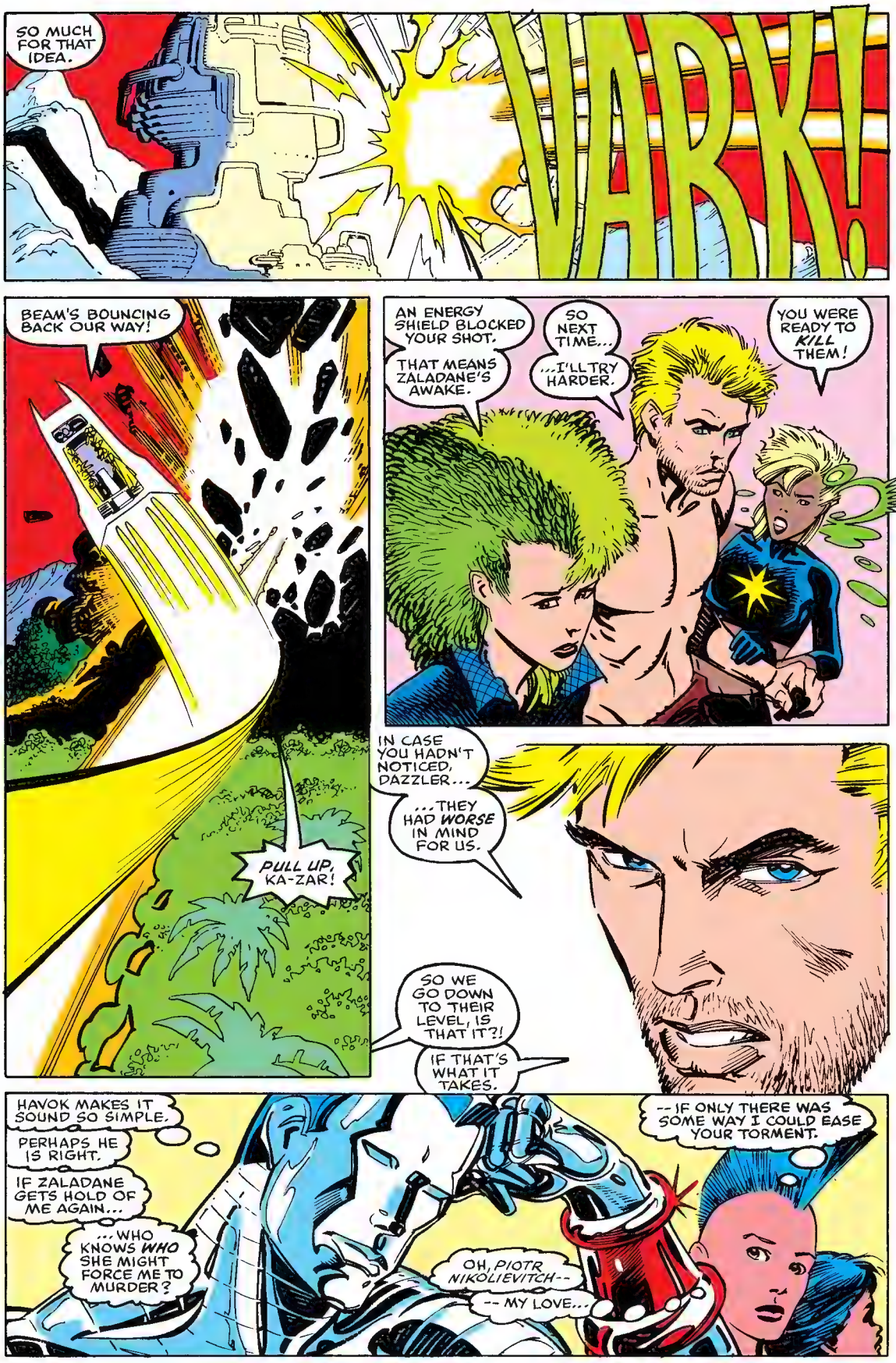

ZALADANE, FOR PITY'S SAKE--!
I HAVE NO PITY.
YOUR FIGHT'S WITH US, NOT THESE CHILDREN!
BUT SHANNA, IT WILL CAUSE YOU SUCH PAIN TO SEE THEM SLAIN...
PLEASE, I BEG YOU, HAVE MERCY!
...AS IT WILL NOBLE COLOSSUS TO SLAY THEM.
I'LL--DO ANYTHING YOU ASK.
MY DEAR, SWEET SHANNA...
...YOU'LL DO THAT ANYWAY.
LORNA?
PSYLOCKE?!
I SENSE FROM YOUR THOUGHTS, YOU AND HAVOK ARE FREE.
SAME GO FOR YOU?
REGRETTABLY, MY BODY REMAINS UNDER WORM'S CONTROL.
THAT SLIMY LITTLE SLUG!
TO PUT IT MILDLY.
BUT MY MIND-- AND PSI-POWERS-- ARE STILL MINE.
THE SITUATION HERE IS CRITICAL, CAN YOU HELP?
LOVE TO.
BUT HAVOK'S PRETTY ZONED FROM THE DRUG THEY-- HEY?!?
THAT IS NOT A PROBLEM.
MY APOLOGIES, ALEX, FOR USING YOU AS MY PUPPET...
...BUT I CAN SEE NO OTHER WAY.
I AM TRYING...
...WITH ALL MY MIGHT...
...TO RESIST--
--BUT I CANNOT!
ZALDANE-- YOU HAVE MADE YOUR POINT--
--DO NOT MAKE ME DO THIS!

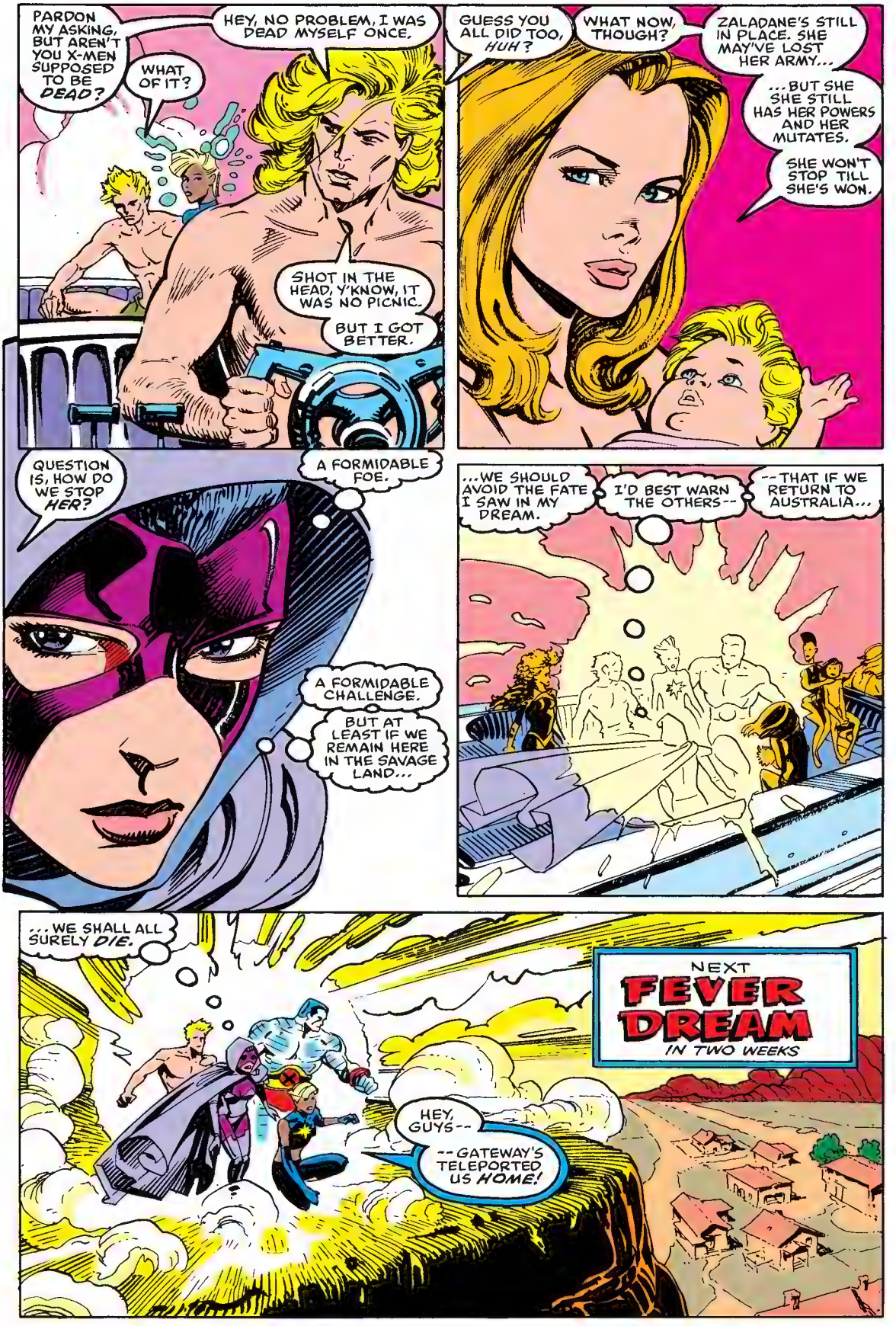
SUDDENLY, THOUGH, AS COLOSSUS' GIANT HANDS CLOSE ABOUT THEIR VICTIMS...
SKRAKAM!
KTHOOM!
S'PRISE, BUNKIES!
CAN IT BE-- IMPOSSIBLE!
I STRIPPED LORNA DANE OF HER MUTANT POWER, WHERE COULD SHE HAVE GAINED SUCH STRENGTH?
NO MATTER. SHE IS BUT FLESH.
COLOSSUS CAN EASILY SMASH HER TO A PULP.
FUD!
NOT TODAY, SIS!
THIS IS CRAZY! I'M STANDING TOE-TO-TOE WITH PETER, GIVING AS GOOD AS I GET!
BUT BOY, I GOTTA ADMIT--
--IT'S FUN!
ONLY REGRET IS THAT IT'S A PAL TAKING THE LUMPS, AND NOT MY SO-CALLED "SISTER."
BUT I SWEAR...
...HER TURN'LL COME--
BDOW!
--WITH A VENGEANCE!
EV'YBODY'S FORGOT 'BOUT ME!
GRAB THIS GUN...
...GO PROTECT MY MAM!
SNAPKT!
TOLD YOU SO, ZALADANE.
YOUR TIDE'S TURNED!

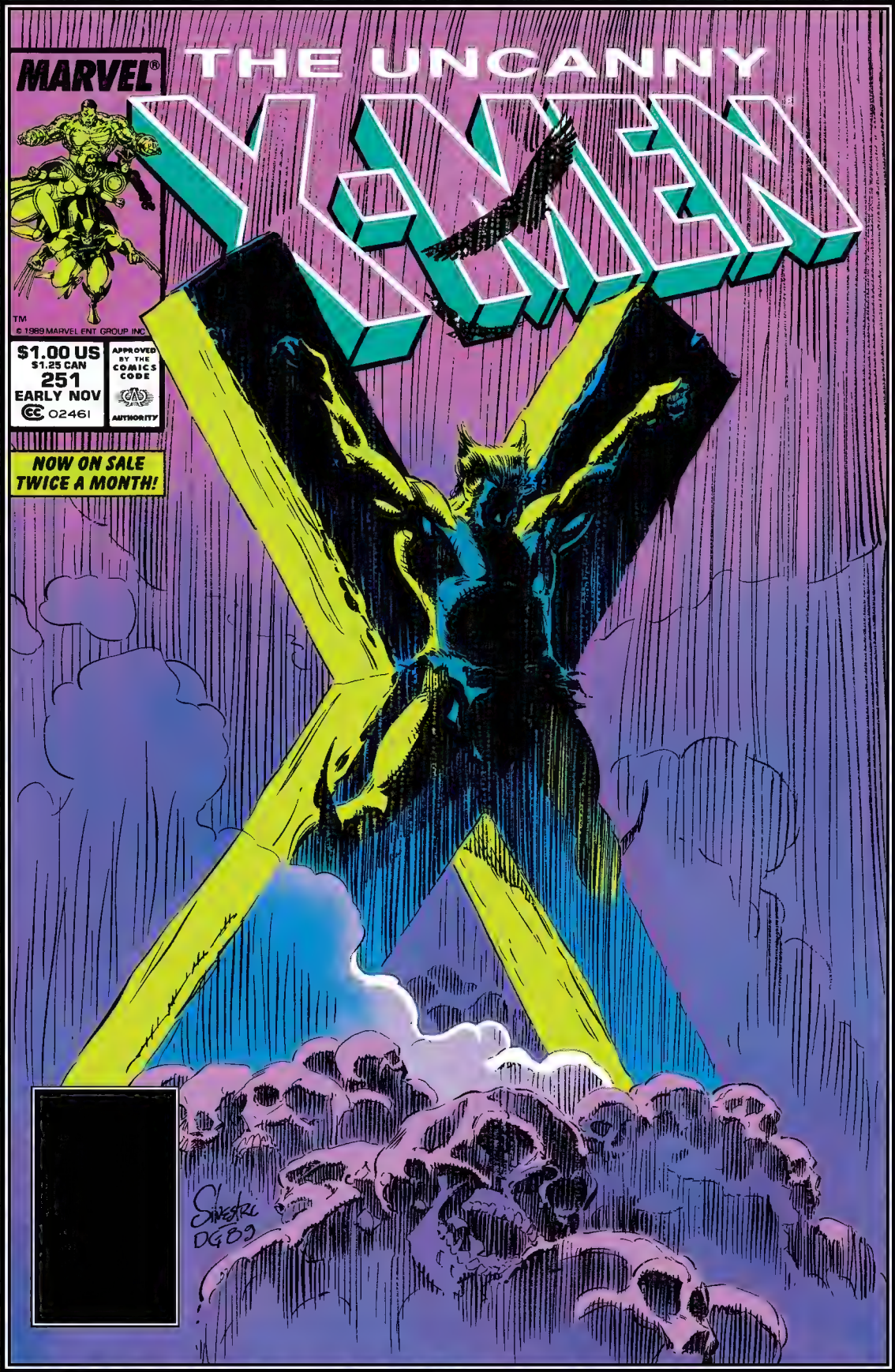

BRAVADO, JUNGLE LORD!
WHAT ARE YOU FEW AGAINST MY HORDE?
MOREOVER, DESTROY MY STRONGEST SERVITORS...
...AND YOU SLAY YOUR TRUEST FRIENDS!
SPOW!
WHAT PRICE VICTORY, THEN?
WITCH HAS A POINT, CURSE HER.
WHICH IS PROBABLY WHY SHE FORCED COLOSSUS TO SPEAK HER LINES!
PETER, SON OF NEREEL!
A VOICE-- INSIDE MY HEAD!
I AM PSYLOCKE.
WORM IS THE KEY TO ZALADANE'S STRENGTH.
HIS POWER ENSLAVES THE X-MEN AND MANY IN HER ARMY.
ELIMINATE HIM, AND ALL ARE FREE!
HEH HEH HEH
MISSED!
CLOSE ENOUGH, THOUGH, TO DO THE TRICK.
SMASHING THE THRONE KNOCKED HIM UNCONSCIOUS.
ZAPT!
AYIEE
HEY, EVERYBODY'S FROZEN, WHAT GIVES?
WITHOUT WORM'S WILL TO MOTIVATE HIS SLAVES...
...WE ARE ALL IMPRISONED WITHIN OUR CONTROL MEMBRANES.
NOT ME, BETTS!
NOT--
--ANY--
--LONGER!
I SHOULD BE SO LUCKY.
UNFORTUNATELY, MY MEMBRANE'S UNDERNEATH MY ARMOR. CAN'T REMOVE ONE WITHOUT THE OTHER, AND THERE'S NO TIME TO TRY.
SEE TO THE OTHERS, ALISON. SINCE NOTHING CAN HARM ME THROUGH MY ARMOR, I SHOULD BE SAFE ENOUGH AS I AM.


SPEAKING OF THOSE "OTHERS"...
HEAD'S MUZZY--
--PSYLOCKE DID WHAT SHE COULD...
...BUT I CAN BARELY STRING ONE THOUGHT...
...AFTER ANOTHER.
ZALADANE'S GOONS--
--GANGING UP ON LORNA!
AND UP ABOVE--
--ZALADANE HERSELF--
--GOT THE DROP ON THE X-MEN!
ZAM!
SHOULD HAVE DONE THIS BEFORE--
--WHEN I HAD THE CHANCE--
--WOULD HAVE SAVED A LOT OF LIVES--
--SPARED EVERYONE A LOT OF GRIEF!
HAVOK!
HIS BEAM--RAW ENERGY PLASMA--DISINTEGRATES WHAT IT STRIKES--!
COUNTER-ENERGY FIELD--TO PROTECT ME!
THOSE THOUGHTS--AND THE REALITY THAT SPRINGS FROM THEM--TAKE ALL OF A SPLIT-SECOND.
UNFORTUNATELY, ZALADANE HASN'T GOT ANYWHERE NEAR THE HANG OF THE POWER SHE STOLE.
SPKOW!
...SHE NEGLECTED TO ANCHOR HERSELF IN PLACE AGAINST ITS FORCE.
SO--WHILE DEFENDING HERSELF AGAINST THE DESTRUCTIVE ENERGIES OF HAVOK'S BLAST...
WITH APPROPRIATELY IMPRESSIVE RESULTS.
HEADS UP, PEOPLE! WALL'S COMING DOWN!
ON ZALADANE, I HOPE.
KARA
BAM!


ZALADANE MUST BE UNCONSCIOUS--
--OR DEAD--
--BECAUSE I AM MY-SELF AGAIN!
GLAD TO HEAR IT, SILVER-TOP!
FORGIVE ME, LORNA, FOR STRIKING YOU.
NO HARM DONE.
LIKEWISE.
IS IT MY IMAGINATION...
...OR HAS LORNA GROWN BIG AS ME?
PLACE IS COMIN' DOWN, 'ROUND OUR EARS!
STOP USING SO MANY CONTRAC-TIONS, KEVIN!
YOU'LL SET A BAD EXAMPLE FOR THE BABY!
IF THERE ARE NO OBJECTIONS--
--GRAMMATI-CAL OR OTHER-WISE--
--I SUGGEST WE VACATE THE PREMISES.
PRONTO!
WE X-MEN EVER GIVE UP THE SUPER-HERO BIZ...
...BET WE'D HAVE A GREAT FUTURE IN URBAN DEMOLITION!
OVER HERE--
--ONE OF ZALADANE'S SKYSLEDS!
WHAT ABOUT ZALADANE'S ARMY?!
PSYLOCKE AND I FREED 'EM FROM WORM'S MEMBRANES, KA-ZAR...
...SCOOTED 'EM OUT THE GROUND-LEVEL ENTRANCES.
SO, DAZZ, THAT MEAN ONLY THE BAD GUYS ARE LEFT?
SHZAM!
PRETTY MUCH, I GUESS--
-- HAVOK?!!?


SO MUCH FOR THAT IDEA.
VARK!
BEAM'S BOUNCING BACK OUR WAY!
PULL UP, KA-ZAR!
AN ENERGY SHIELD BLOCKED YOUR SHOT.
THAT MEANS ZALADANE'S AWAKE.
SO NEXT TIME...
...I'LL TRY HARDER.
YOU WERE READY TO KILL THEM!
IN CASE YOU HADN'T NOTICED, DAZZLER...
...THEY HAD WORSE IN MIND FOR US.
SO WE GO DOWN TO THEIR LEVEL, IS THAT IT?!
IF THAT'S WHAT IT TAKES.
HAVOK MAKES IT SOUND SO SIMPLE.
PERHAPS HE IS RIGHT.
IF ZALADANE GETS HOLD OF ME AGAIN...
...WHO KNOWS WHO SHE MIGHT FORCE ME TO MURDER?
-- IF ONLY THERE WAS SOME WAY I COULD EASE YOUR TORMENT.
OH, PIOTR NIKOLIEVITCH--
-- MY LOVE...


PARDON MY ASKING, BUT AREN'T YOU X-MEN SUPPOSED TO BE DEAD?
WHAT OF IT?
HEY, NO PROBLEM, I WAS DEAD MYSELF ONCE.
SHOT IN THE HEAD, Y'KNOW, IT WAS NO PICNIC.
BUT I GOT BETTER.
GUESS YOU ALL DID TOO, HUH?
WHAT NOW, THOUGH?
ZALADANE'S STILL IN PLACE. SHE MAY'VE LOST HER ARMY...
...BUT SHE SHE STILL HAS HER POWERS AND HER MUTATES.
SHE WON'T STOP TILL SHE'S WON.
QUESTION IS, HOW DO WE STOP HER?
A FORMIDABLE FOE.
A FORMIDABLE CHALLENGE.
BUT AT LEAST IF WE REMAIN HERE IN THE SAVAGE LAND...
...WE SHOULD AVOID THE FATE I SAW IN MY DREAM.
I'D BEST WARN THE OTHERS--
--THAT IF WE RETURN TO AUSTRALIA...
...WE SHALL ALL SURELY DIE.
NEXT
FEVER DREAM
IN TWO WEEKS
HEY, GUYS--
--GATEWAY'S TELEPORTED US HOME!


MARVEL
THE UNCANNY
X-MEN
TM
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$1.00 US
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251
EARLY NOV
02461
APPROVED BY THE COMICS CODE
AUTHORITY
NOW ON SALE TWICE A MONTH!
SINISTRO
DGBJ

STAN LEE PRESENTS
FEVER PITCH
STARRING THE LAST OF THE UNCANNY X-MEN
HEAT MEANS SUN.
SUN MEANS DAY.
I'VE SURVIVED TO SEE ANOTHER DAWN.
LUCKY ME.
CHRIS CLAREMONT WRITER
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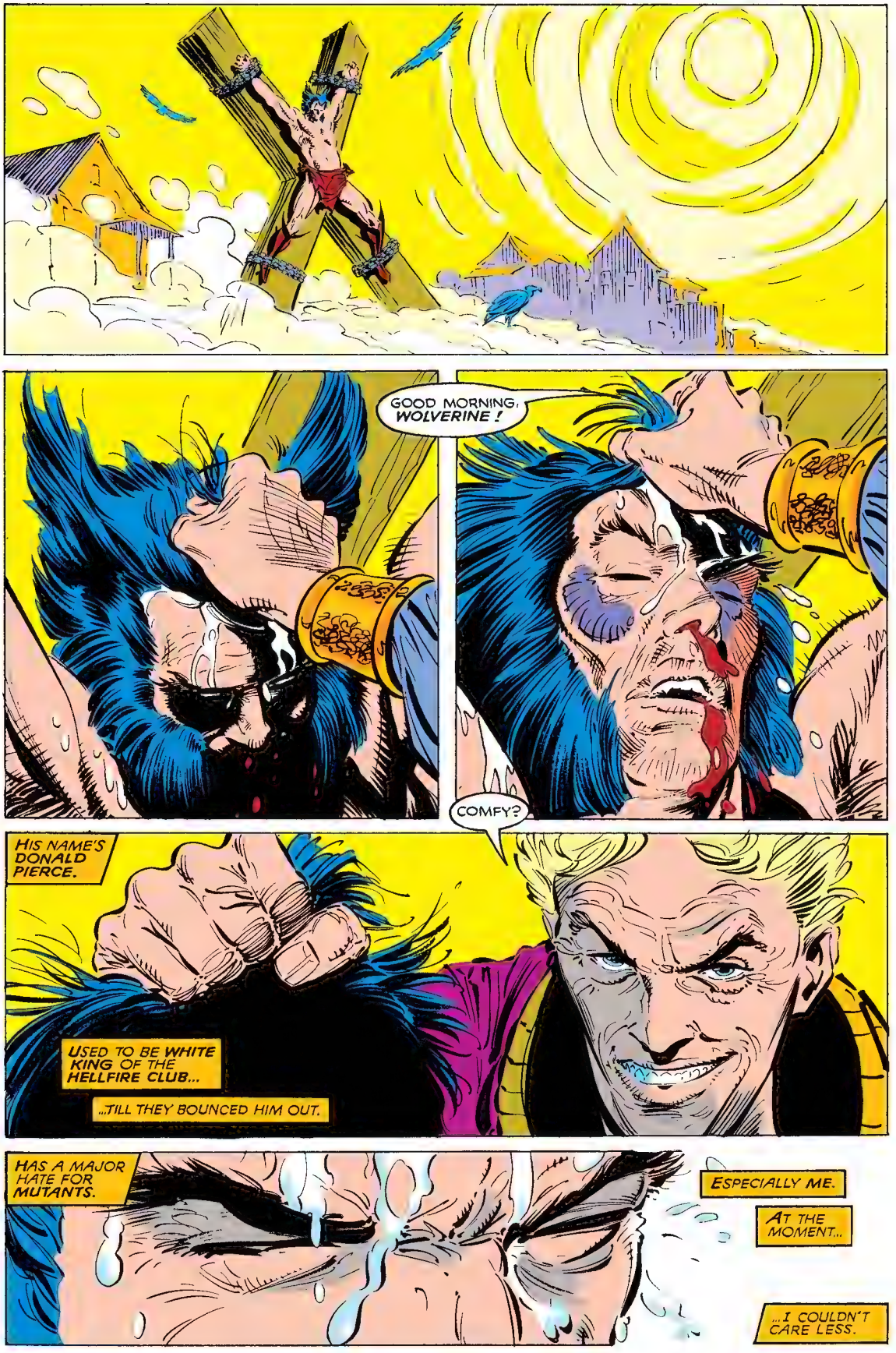
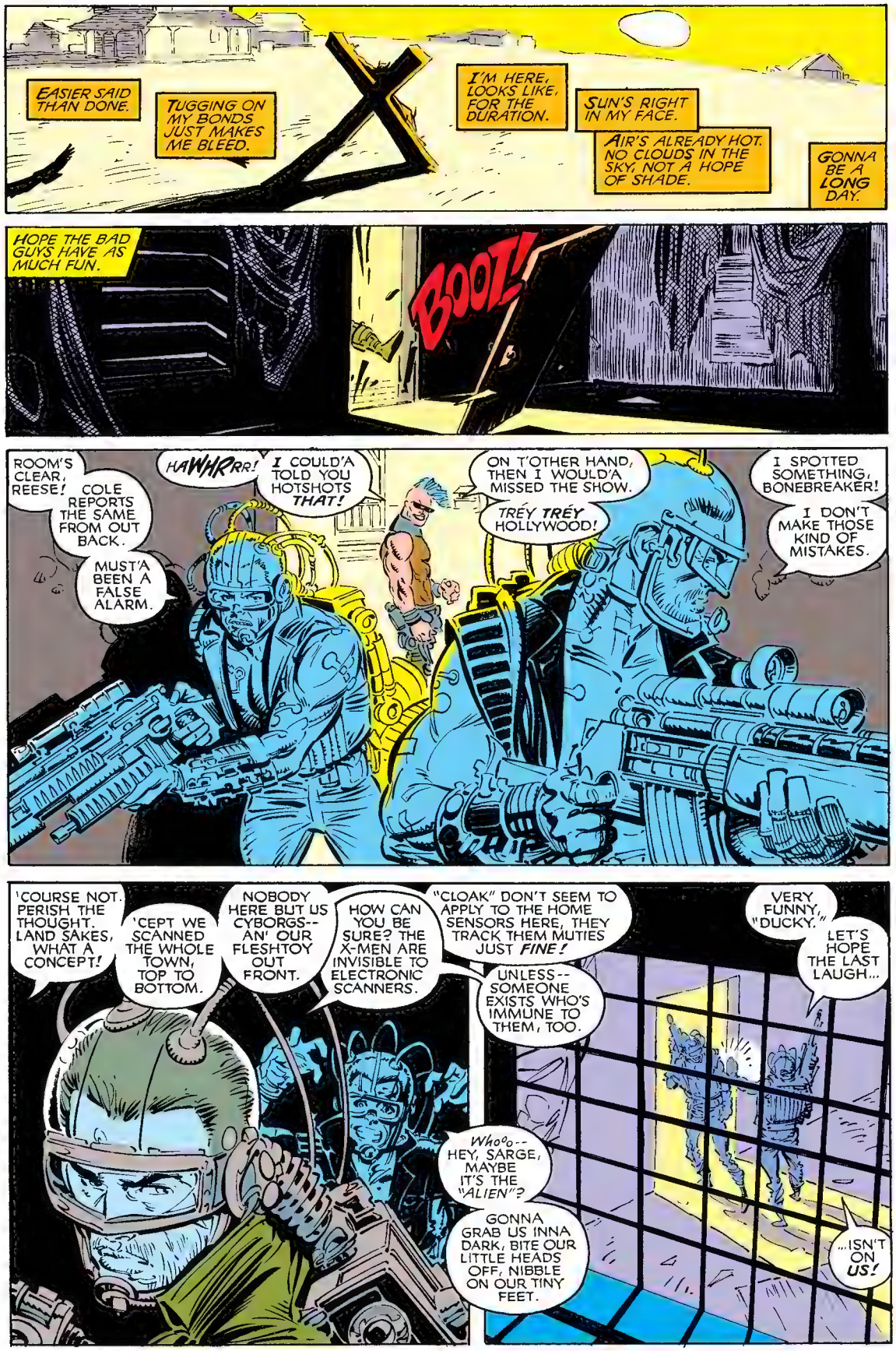

GOOD MORNING, WOLVERINE!
COMFY?
HIS NAME'S DONALD PIERCE.
USED TO BE WHITE KING OF THE HELLFIRE CLUB...
...TILL THEY BOUNCED HIM OUT.
HAS A MAJOR HATE FOR MUTANTS.
ESPECIALLY ME.
AT THE MOMENT...
...I COULDN'T CARE LESS.

LOOK AT ME, X-MAN--
--OR PERHAPS I'LL SLICE AWAY YOUR EYELIDS...
...WE'LL SEE IF THEY GROW BACK...
...OR IF YOUR VAUNTED HEALING POWER WILL KEEP YOU FROM GOING BLIND!
THAT'S BETTER--
--THAT'S BETTER--
-- YOU'RE LEARNING.
SEE HOW PLEASANT LIFE CAN BE IF YOU COOPERATE?
YOU REMEMBER MY ASSOCIATES, DO YOU NOT?
REST ASSURED, THEY ALL REMEMBER YOU.
WE'VE ALL OF US FELT YOUR CLAWS, WOLVERINE.
THIS IS WHERE WE RETURN THAT PAIN, IN FULL MEASURE.
COLE, REESE AND MACON WERE HELLFIRE COMMANDOS--
--UNTIL YOU CUT THEM TO BITS.
THEY'D HAVE DIED, BUT FOR MY GENIUS.
NOW, THEY'RE SUPER-POWERED CYBORGS.
AS AM I.
AS ARE ALL MY REAVERS.
LADY DEATHSTRIKE VOLUNTARILY SACRIFICED HER PHYSICAL HUMANITY TO GAIN HER REVENGE ON YOU.
AND FINALLY-- PRETTYBOY, BONEBREAKER AND SKULLBUSTER.
LAST OF MY ORIGINAL REAVERS.
YOU AND THE X-MEN DESTROYED THEIR GANG...
...AND STOLE FROM THEM THIS TOWN THAT WAS THEIR HOME, TO USE AS YOUR OWN.

I'M...
..IMPRESSED.
SLAP!
YOU DARE MOCK ME!
VERY GOOD, WOLVERINE.
OH, VERY GOOD! YOU ANGERED ME.
MADE ME LOSE MY TEMPER.
LOSE CONTROL.
THIS ROUND, THEN, TO YOU.
ENJOY THE TASTE OF VICTORY, LITTLE MAN.
YOU HAVE MY WORD.
IT'LL BE YOUR LAST!
WANNA BET?

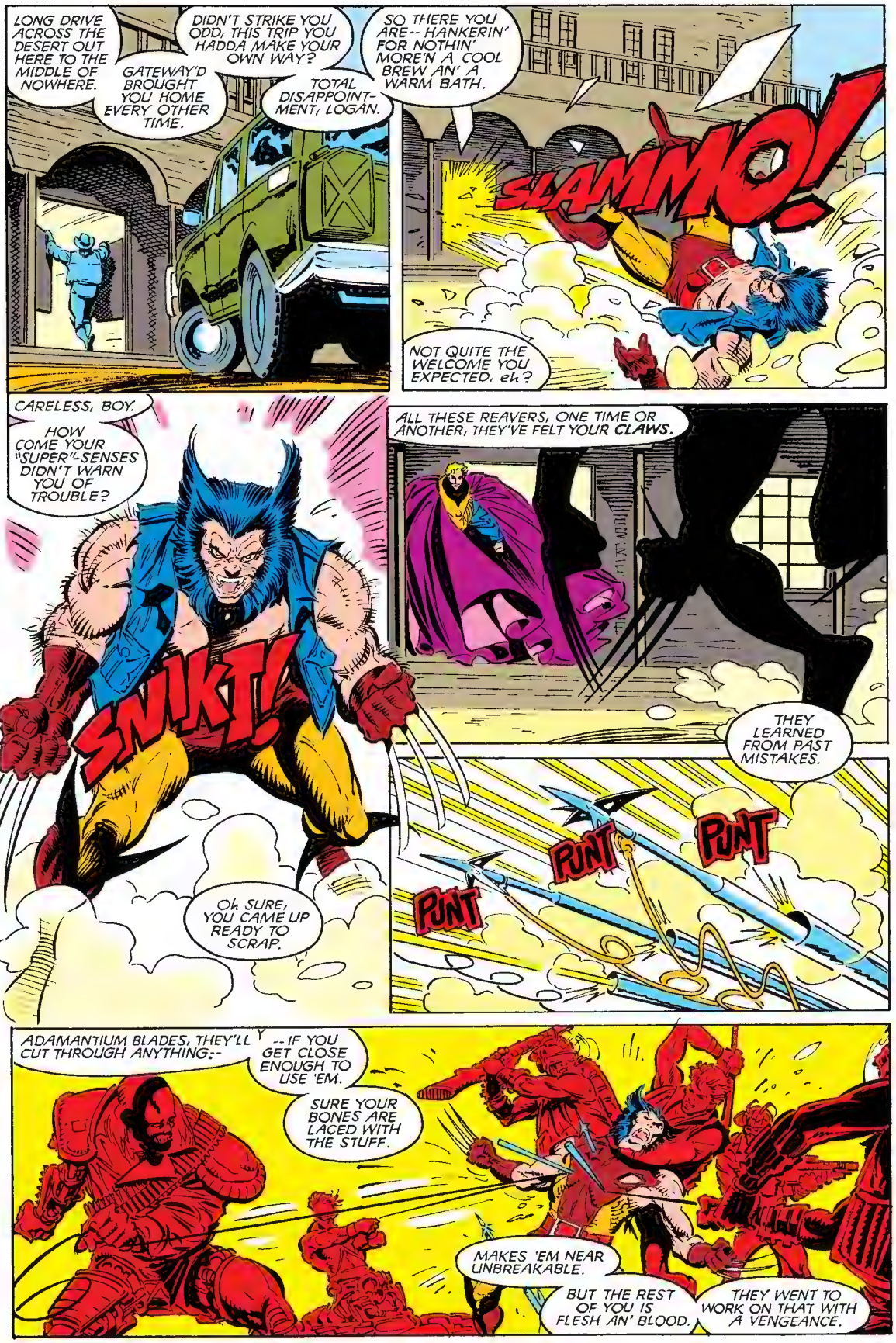

EASIER SAID THAN DONE.
TUGGING ON MY BONDS JUST MAKES ME BLEED.
I'M HERE, LOOKS LIKE, FOR THE DURATION.
SUN'S RIGHT IN MY FACE.
AIR'S ALREADY HOT. NO CLOUDS IN THE SKY, NOT A HOPE OF SHADE.
GONNA BE A LONG DAY.
HOPE THE BAD GUYS HAVE AS MUCH FUN.
BOOT!
ROOM'S CLEAR, REESE! COLE REPORTS THE SAME FROM OUT BACK.
MUST'A BEEN A FALSE ALARM.
HAWHRRR!
I COULD'A TOLD YOU HOTSHOTS THAT!
ON T'OTHER HAND, THEN I WOULD'A MISSED THE SHOW.
TRÉY TRÉY HOLLYWOOD!
I SPOTTED SOMETHING, BONEBREAKER!
I DON'T MAKE THOSE KIND OF MISTAKES.
'COURSE NOT. PERISH THE THOUGHT. LAND SAKES, WHAT A CONCEPT!
'CEPT WE SCANNED THE WHOLE TOWN, TOP TO BOTTOM.
NOBODY HERE BUT US CYBORGS-- AN' OUR FLESHTOY OUT FRONT.
HOW CAN YOU BE SURE? THE X-MEN ARE INVISIBLE TO ELECTRONIC SCANNERS.
"CLOAK" DON'T SEEM TO APPLY TO THE HOME SENSORS HERE, THEY TRACK THEM MUTIES JUST FINE!
UNLESS-- SOMEONE EXISTS WHO'S IMMUNE TO THEM, TOO.
Whoºº-- HEY, SARGE, MAYBE IT'S THE "ALIEN"?
GONNA GRAB US INNA DARK, BITE OUR LITTLE HEADS OFF, NIBBLE ON OUR TINY FEET.
VERY FUNNY, "DUCKY."
LET'S HOPE THE LAST LAUGH...
...ISN'T ON US!

WHO THE HECK ARE THESE GUYS?!
WHERE'D THEY COME FROM, WHAT DO THEY WANT?!!
THAT BALD "MAD MAXOID" WITH THE SHADES--HE'S MORE MACHINE THAN PERSON!
UTTERLY GROSS!
DON'T LIKE THE WAY THEY LAUGH.
THAT'S ONE OF THE X-MEN IN THE STREET.
NO SIGN OF ANY OF HIS PALS...
...OR THAT OLD GEEK, GATEWAY.
WHERE'D EVERY-BODY GO, WHAT'S HAPPENING?!!
TOO HOT TO SWEAT.
PERSPIRATION EVAPORATES BEFORE IT REALLY HAS TIME TO FORM.
WHAT I SEE OF MY SKIN...
...STARTIN' TO LOOK AS CRACKED AN' BLISTERED AS THE GROUND.
GONNA GET A LOT WORSE.
WISH I COULD CATCH A DECENT BREATH...
WELL WELL--
--HERE'S A SURPRISE!
IF THERE WAS EVER A TIME TO OPEN ONE OF YOUR TELEPORT GATEWAYS, GATEWAY...
MY KIND'A MAN!
YOU BROUGHT THE WHOLE TEAM!
NOW WE'LL SEE SOME-- Whoa, TIME OUT!
SOME-THING DOESN'T SCOPE.
IF I'M THE FELLA NEEDING A RESCUE...
...HOW COME I'M ALSO ONE OF THE RESCUERS?
TALK TO ME, X-MEN--
--AT LEAST, SAY HELLO!

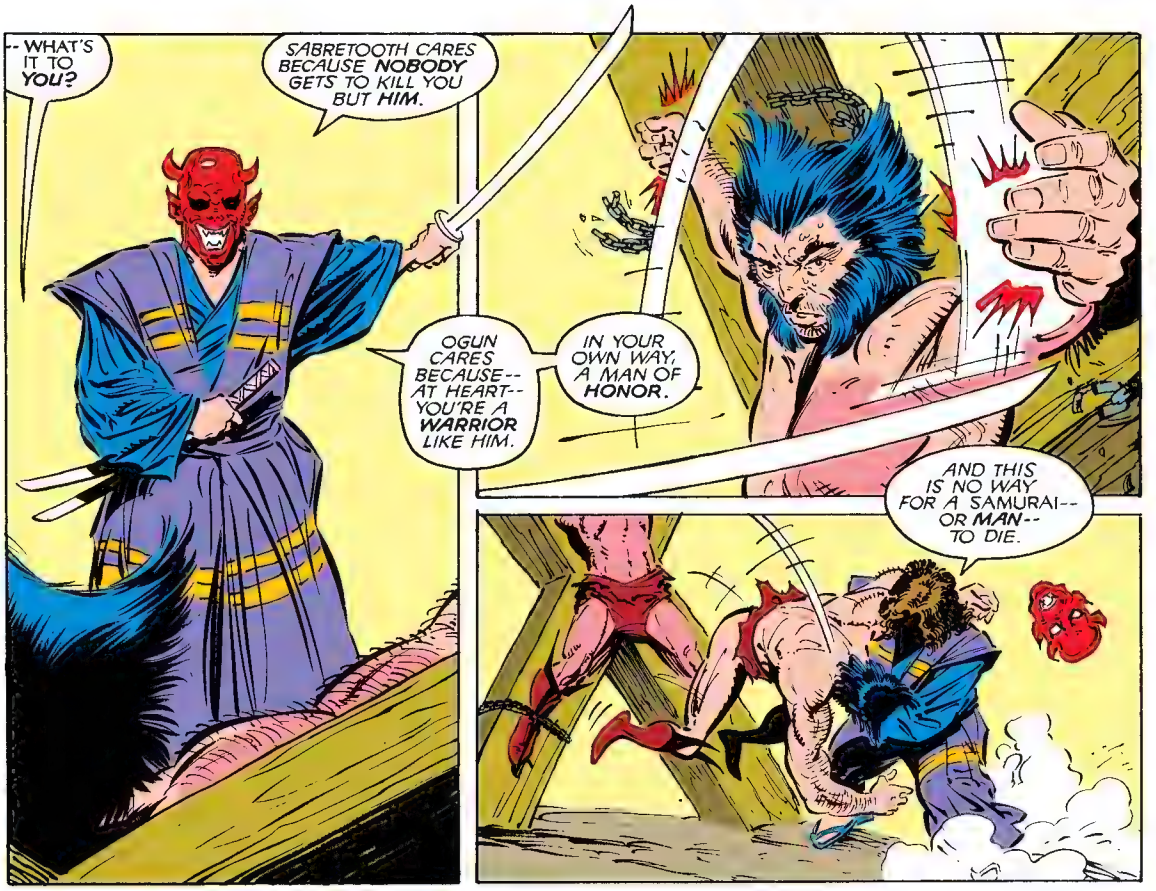
?
ROGUE AN' ME AN' LONG-SHOT--
--BODIES PULLIN' A FADE!
OTHERS AREN'T BATTIN' AN EYE!
STORM!
WHAT HAPPENED WHILE I WAS AWAY?!
IS ANY OF THIS REAL--
--BEHIND YOU, DARLIN', LOOK OUT!
SKYAM!
I DIDN'T MEAN TO, YOU'VE GOT TO BELIEVE ME, IT WAS AN ACCIDENT!
I KNOW, COMRADE.
THESE THINGS HAPPEN.
BUT SOMEHOW, HAVOK, I ALWAYS ASSUMED-- EVEN AT THE WORST--
--NEVER TO US.
CRAZY!
IT'S CRAZY!
I'M CRAZY!
MAYBE THE REAVERS...
...PLAYIN' WITH MY HEAD?
NO SUCH LUCK, MY FRIEND.
ANOTHER PSYLOCKE?
WRONG, AGAIN-- THE ONE AND ONLY!
LOOK AT ME, WOLVERINE!
SEE WHAT THE REAVERS HAVE DONE!

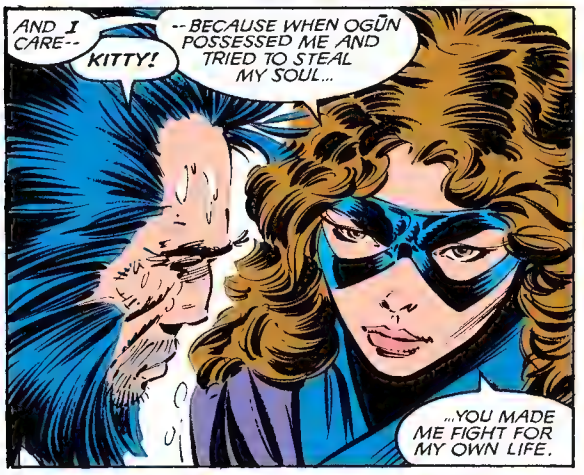
HARD TIME FOR HEROES, "BUB."
ROGUE'S GONE, LONGSHOT QUIT, STORM... GOT KILLED.
ONLY FOUR OF US WERE LEFT WHEN THE REAVERS CAME.
WE NEEDED A LEADER, WOLVERINE!
WHY WEREN'T YOU HERE TO HELP?!
I KNOW, I KNOW, DON'T TELL ME.
OBLIGATION, DUTY, GIRI.
DON'T YOU HAVE A DUTY TO THE X-MEN?
SNIKT
LIKE MY CLAWS?
MAYBE NOT SO MACHO-STYLISH AS YOURS...
... BUT I'LL BET THEY CUT AS DEEP.
SLASH!
YOU GOT CLAWS.
I GOT CLAWS.
ALL GOD'S CHILLUN GOT CLAWS.
THE MORE WE USE 'EM...
...THE BETTER WE LIKE IT!
PSYLOCKE-- BETSY-- DON'T!
WHAT'S THE MATTER, SWEETIE?
AREN'T YOU THE BEST THERE IS AT WHAT YOU DO?
BIT LATE TO TURN SQUEAMISH...
...AT THE SIGHT OF WHAT PEOPLE LOVE SEEING YOU DO BEST.

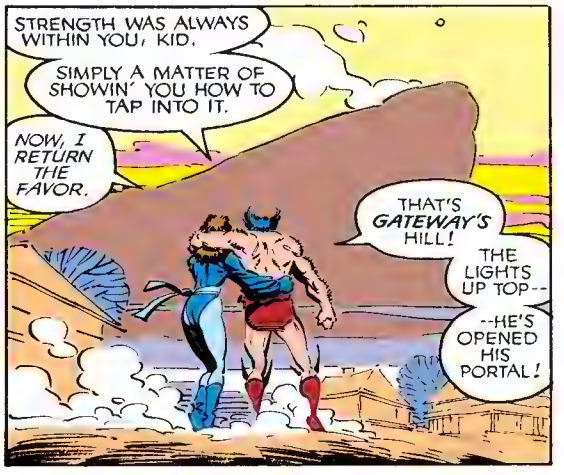
OR COULD IT BE...
...YOU DON'T LIKE WHAT'S INSIDE THE PACKAGE...
...UNDERNEATH THE WRAPPING?
YOU'VE LOOKED BETTER, BOY.
ME, THOUGH-- I FEEL GREAT!
BET YOU'RE CONFUSED, eh?
AFTER ALL, SABRE-TOOTH'S SUPPOSED TO BE DEAD, RIGHT?
BUT THEN AGAIN...
...SO'RE YOU X-MEN.
FAKED YOUR DEATHS, FOR ALL THE WORLD TO SEE...
...THE BETTER TO BE ABLE TO GO AFTER THE BAD GUYS.
JOKE'S ON YOU, eh?
BEIN' A "GHOST"-- EVEN A PRETEND ONE--
-- BOY, IT MADE YOU SO SLOPPY.
WOLVIE I REMEMBER WOULDN'T HAVE BEEN NAILED ANY-WHERE NEAR SO EASY--
--IF AT ALL!

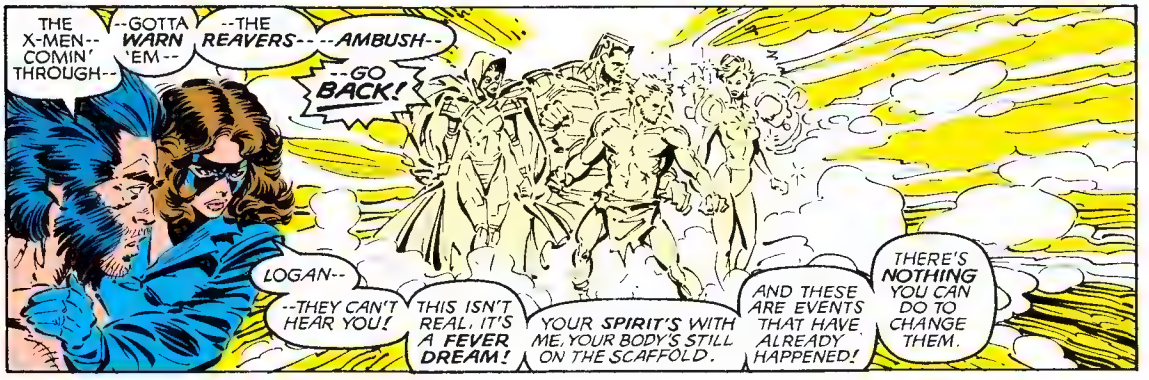

LONG DRIVE ACROSS THE DESERT OUT HERE TO THE MIDDLE OF NOWHERE.
GATEWAY'D BROUGHT YOU HOME EVERY OTHER TIME.
DIDN'T STRIKE YOU ODD, THIS TRIP YOU HADDA MAKE YOUR OWN WAY?
TOTAL DISAPPOINT-MENT, LOGAN.
SO THERE YOU ARE-- HANKERIN' FOR NOTHIN' MORE'N A COOL BREW AN' A WARM BATH.
SLAMMO!
NOT QUITE THE WELCOME YOU EXPECTED, eh?
CARELESS, BOY.
HOW COME YOUR "SUPER"-SENSES DIDN'T WARN YOU OF TROUBLE?
SNIKT!
Oh SURE, YOU CAME UP READY TO SCRAP.
ALL THESE REAVERS, ONE TIME OR ANOTHER, THEY'VE FELT YOUR CLAWS.
THEY LEARNED FROM PAST MISTAKES.
PUNT
PUNT
PUNT
ADAMANTIUM BLADES, THEY'LL CUT THROUGH ANYTHING;--
-- IF YOU GET CLOSE ENOUGH TO USE 'EM.
SURE YOUR BONES ARE LACED WITH THE STUFF.
MAKES 'EM NEAR UNBREAKABLE.
BUT THE REST OF YOU IS FLESH AN' BLOOD.
THEY WENT TO WORK ON THAT WITH A VENGEANCE.

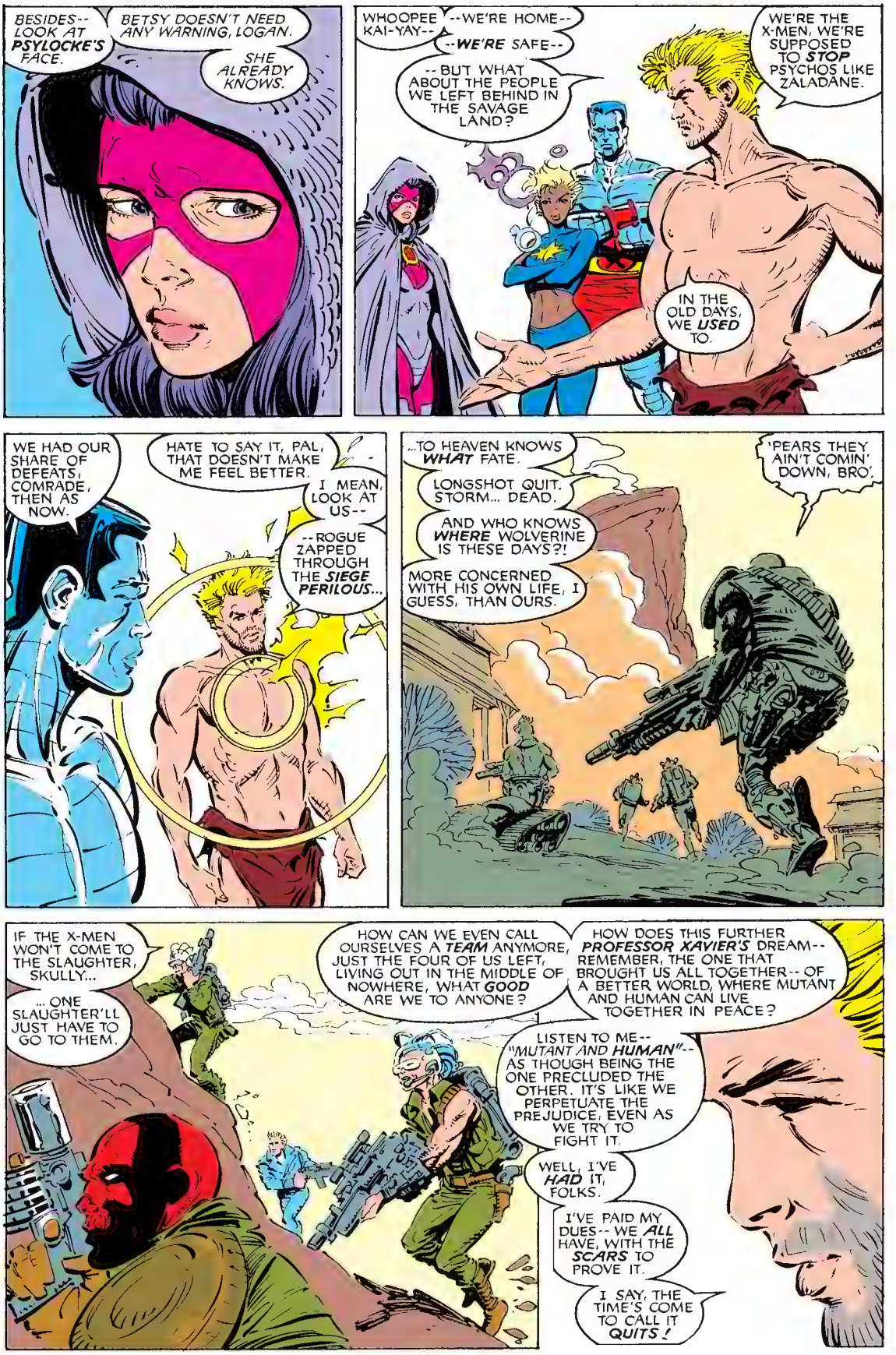
AN' WHEN HIS BULLY-BOYS WERE DONE...
... PIERCE MADE SURE PERSONALLY...
...YOU WOULDN'T LEAVE HIS PARTY...
...BEFORE IT WAS OVER!
MAN HAS A SERIOUS DISLIKE FOR YOU, SONNY.
THAT MASK!
LIKE IT?
JAPANESE DEMON-FACE, WORN BY NINJAS TO SCARE THEIR ADVERSARIES.
BELONGED TO YOUR OLD TEACHER, OGUN.
HE WAS YOUR FRIEND, LOGAN--
--BUT YOU KILLED HIM.
HAD TO.
OR HE'D HAVE DONE WORSE...
...TO KITTY PRYDE.
Ah-- BACK IN THE DAYS WHEN YOU WERE THERE...
...WHEN YOUR TEAM NEEDED YOU.
YOU FOUGHT THEN...
...WHY NOT NOW?
MAYBE I'M TIRED.
MAYBE MY STRING'S FINALLY RUN OUT--

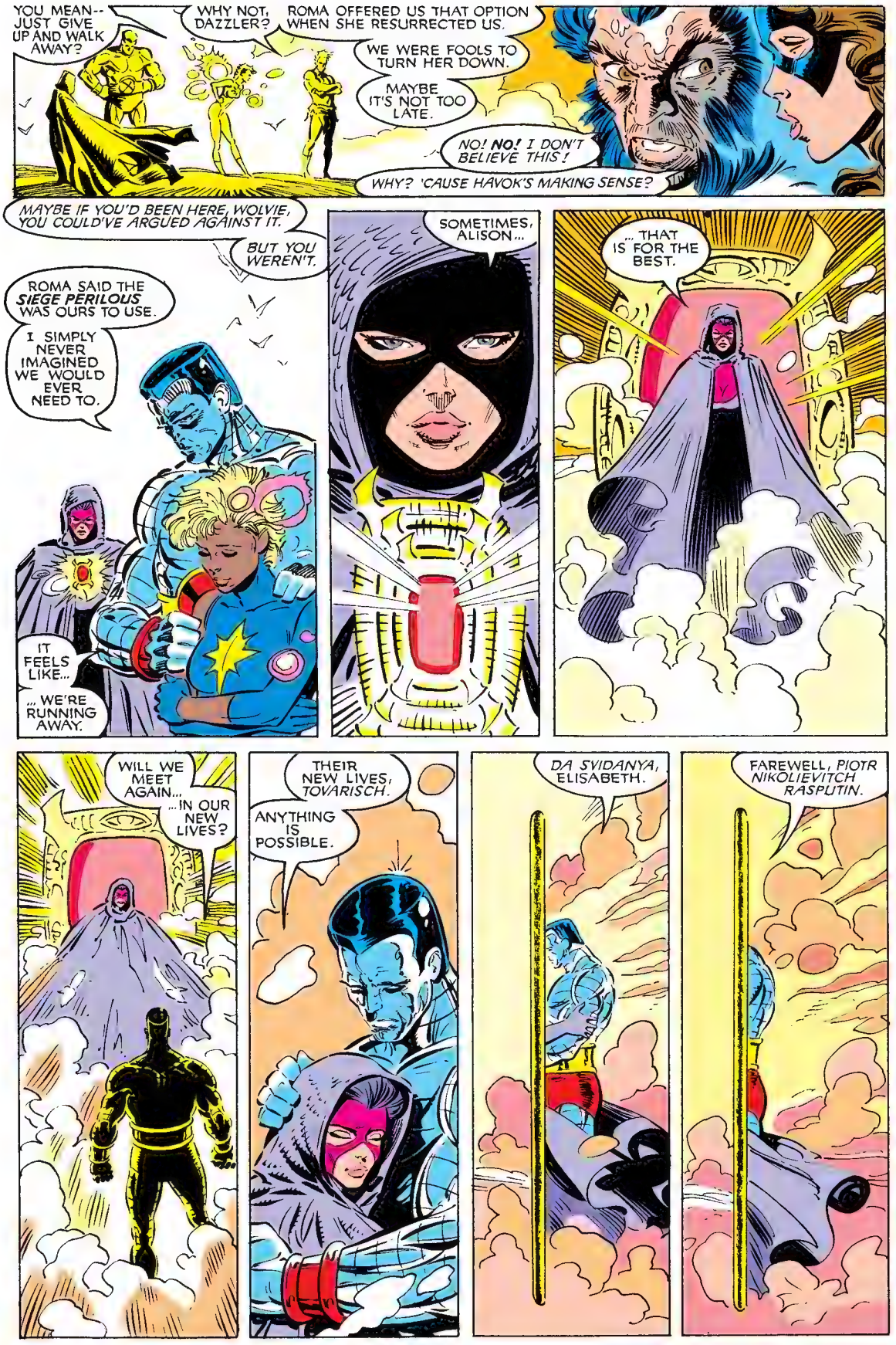

-- WHAT'S IT TO YOU?
SABRETOOTH CARES BECAUSE NOBODY GETS TO KILL YOU BUT HIM.
OGUN CARES BECAUSE-- AT HEART-- YOU'RE A WARRIOR LIKE HIM.
IN YOUR OWN WAY, A MAN OF HONOR.
AND THIS IS NO WAY FOR A SAMURAI-- OR MAN-- TO DIE.

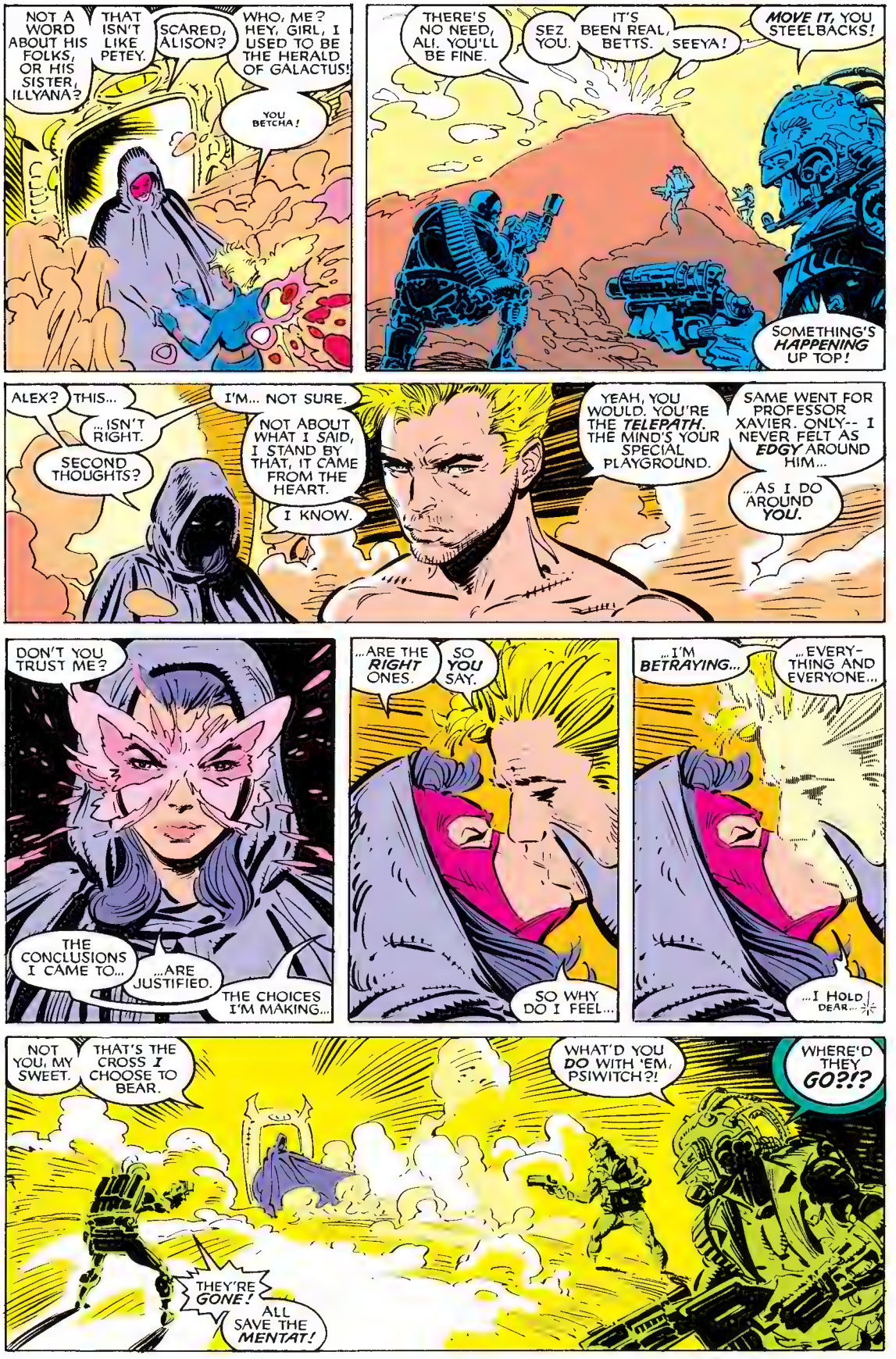

AND I CARE--
KITTY!
--BECAUSE WHEN OGUN POSSESSED ME AND TRIED TO STEAL MY SOUL...
...YOU MADE ME FIGHT FOR MY OWN LIFE.


STRENGTH WAS ALWAYS WITHIN YOU, KID.
SIMPLY A MATTER OF SHOWIN' YOU HOW TO TAP INTO IT.
NOW, I RETURN THE FAVOR.
THAT'S GATEWAY'S HILL!
THE LIGHTS UP TOP--
--HE'S OPENED HIS PORTAL!


THE X-MEN-- COMIN' THROUGH--
--GOTTA WARN 'EM--
--THE REAVERS---
---AMBUSH--
--GO BACK!
LOGAN--
--THEY CAN'T HEAR YOU!
THIS ISN'T REAL, IT'S A FEVER DREAM!
YOUR SPIRIT'S WITH ME, YOUR BODY'S STILL ON THE SCAFFOLD.
AND THESE ARE EVENTS THAT HAVE ALREADY HAPPENED!
THERE'S NOTHING YOU CAN DO TO CHANGE THEM.

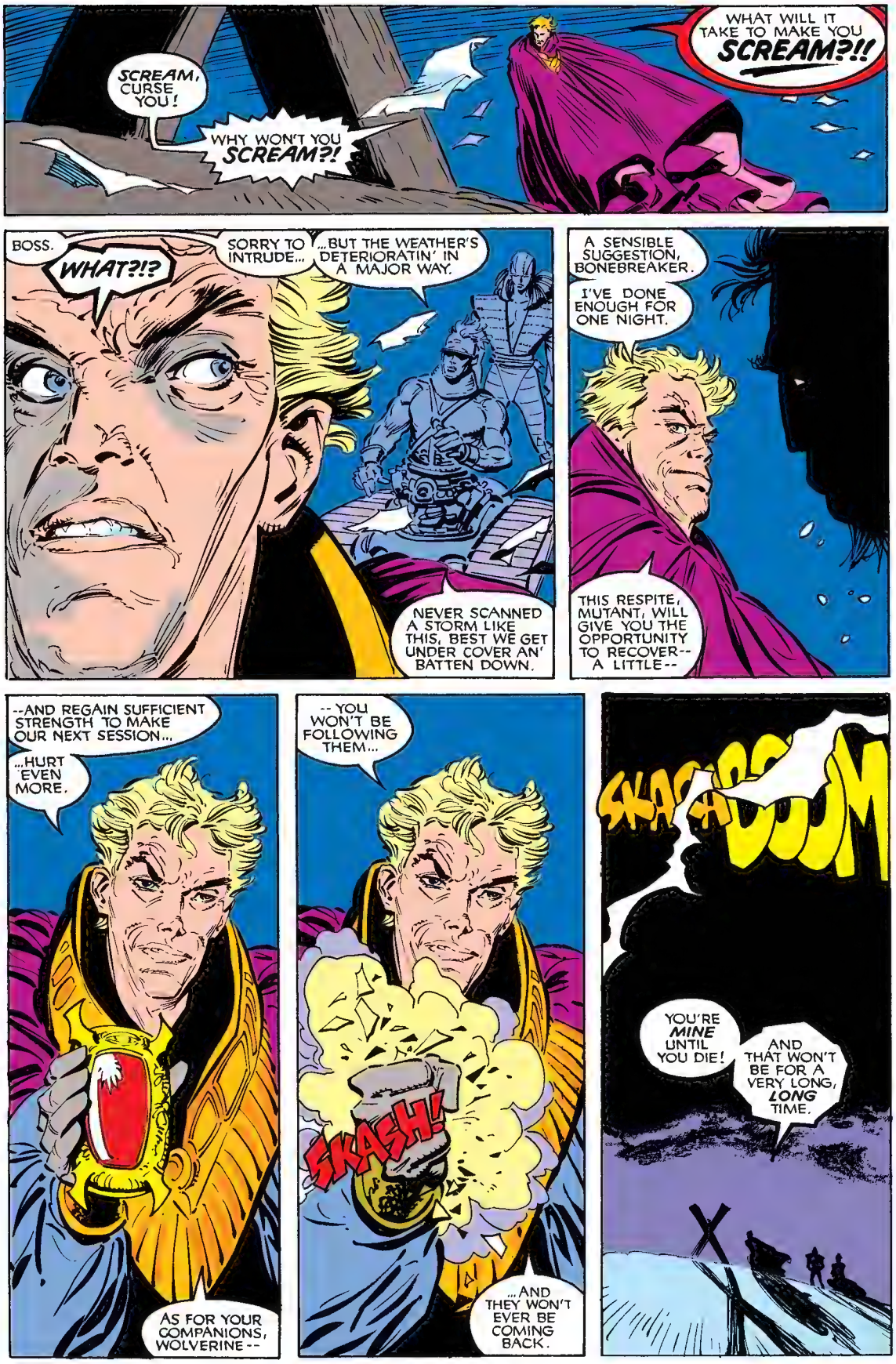

BESIDES-- LOOK AT PSYLOCKE'S FACE.
BETSY DOESN'T NEED ANY WARNING, LOGAN.
SHE ALREADY KNOWS.
WHOOPEE KAI-YAY--
--WE'RE HOME--
--WE'RE SAFE--
--BUT WHAT ABOUT THE PEOPLE WE LEFT BEHIND IN THE SAVAGE LAND?
WE'RE THE X-MEN, WE'RE SUPPOSED TO STOP PSYCHOS LIKE ZALADANE.
IN THE OLD DAYS, WE USED TO.
WE HAD OUR SHARE OF DEFEATS, COMRADE, THEN AS NOW.
HATE TO SAY IT, PAL, THAT DOESN'T MAKE ME FEEL BETTER.
I MEAN, LOOK AT US--
--ROGUE ZAPPED THROUGH THE SIEGE PERILOUS...
...TO HEAVEN KNOWS WHAT FATE.
LONGSHOT QUIT. STORM... DEAD.
AND WHO KNOWS WHERE WOLVERINE IS THESE DAYS?!
MORE CONCERNED WITH HIS OWN LIFE, I GUESS, THAN OURS.
'PEARS THEY AIN'T COMIN' DOWN, BRO'.
IF THE X-MEN WON'T COME TO THE SLAUGHTER, SKULLY...
... ONE SLAUGHTER'LL JUST HAVE TO GO TO THEM.
HOW CAN WE EVEN CALL OURSELVES A TEAM ANYMORE, JUST THE FOUR OF US LEFT, LIVING OUT IN THE MIDDLE OF NOWHERE, WHAT GOOD ARE WE TO ANYONE?
HOW DOES THIS FURTHER PROFESSOR XAVIER'S DREAM-- REMEMBER, THE ONE THAT BROUGHT US ALL TOGETHER-- OF A BETTER WORLD, WHERE MUTANT AND HUMAN CAN LIVE TOGETHER IN PEACE?
LISTEN TO ME-- "MUTANT AND HUMAN"-- AS THOUGH BEING THE ONE PRECLUDED THE OTHER. IT'S LIKE WE PERPETUATE THE PREJUDICE, EVEN AS WE TRY TO FIGHT IT.
WELL, I'VE HAD IT, FOLKS.
I'VE PAID MY DUES-- WE ALL HAVE, WITH THE SCARS TO PROVE IT.
I SAY, THE TIME'S COME TO CALL IT QUITS!

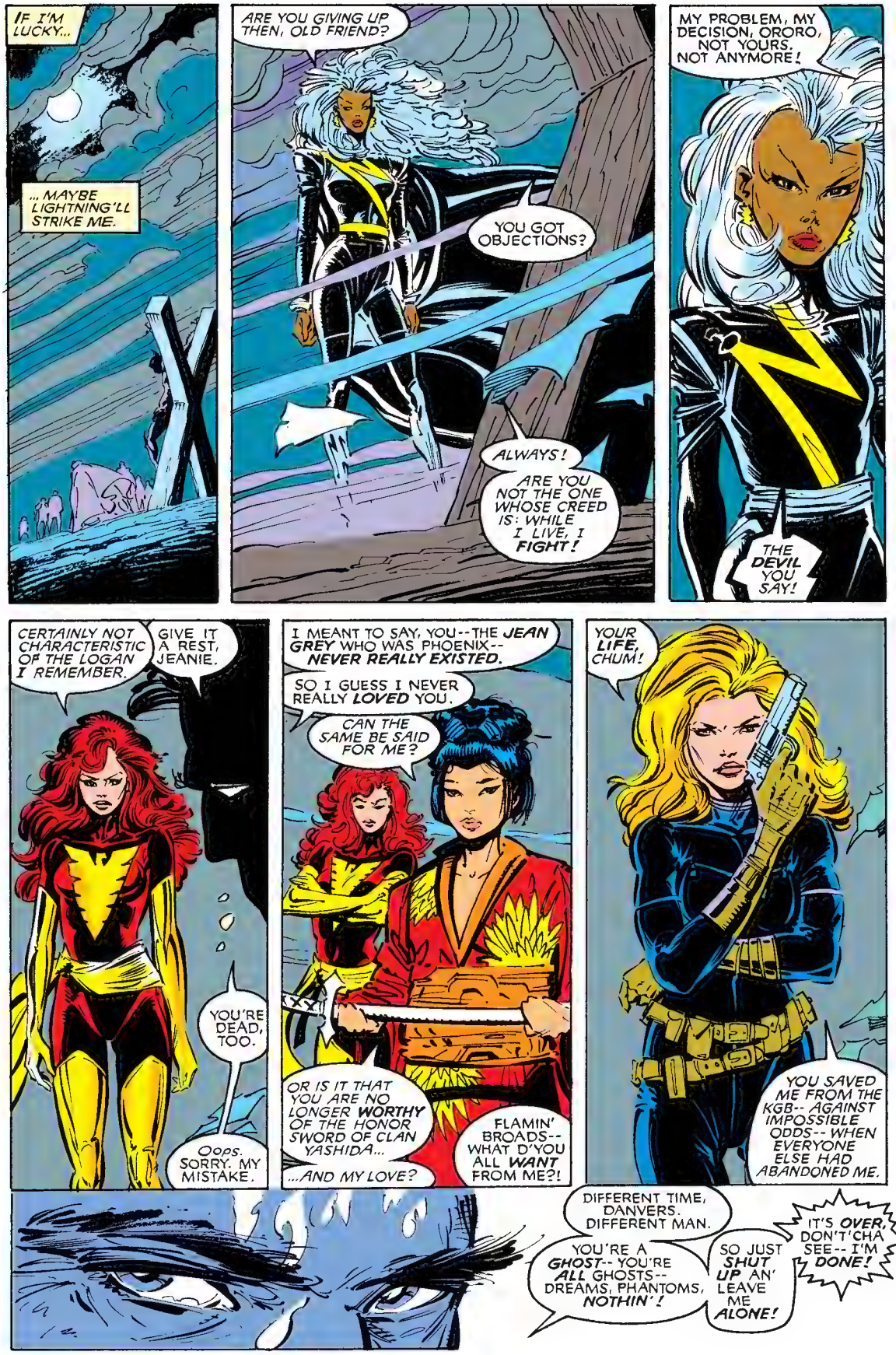

YOU MEAN-- JUST GIVE UP AND WALK AWAY?
WHY NOT, DAZZLER?
ROMA OFFERED US THAT OPTION WHEN SHE RESURRECTED US.
WE WERE FOOLS TO TURN HER DOWN.
MAYBE IT'S NOT TOO LATE.
NO! NO! I DON'T BELIEVE THIS!
WHY? 'CAUSE HAVOK'S MAKING SENSE?
MAYBE IF YOU'D BEEN HERE, WOLVIE, YOU COULD'VE ARGUED AGAINST IT.
BUT YOU WEREN'T.
ROMA SAID THE SIEGE PERILOUS WAS OURS TO USE.
I SIMPLY NEVER IMAGINED WE WOULD EVER NEED TO.
IT FEELS LIKE...
... WE'RE RUNNING AWAY.
SOMETIMES, ALISON...
... THAT IS FOR THE BEST.
WILL WE MEET AGAIN...
...IN OUR NEW LIVES?
THEIR NEW LIVES, TOVARISCH.
ANYTHING IS POSSIBLE.
DA SVIDANYA, ELISABETH.
FAREWELL, PIOTR NIKOLIEVITCH RASPUTIN.


NOT A WORD ABOUT HIS FOLKS, OR HIS SISTER, ILLYANA?
THAT ISN'T LIKE PETEY.
SCARED, ALISON?
WHO, ME? HEY, GIRL, I USED TO BE THE HERALD OF GALACTUS!
YOU BETCHA!
THERE'S NO NEED, ALI. YOU'LL BE FINE.
SEZ YOU.
IT'S BEEN REAL, BETTS.
SEEYA!
MOVE IT, YOU STEELBACKS!
SOMETHING'S HAPPENING UP TOP!
ALEX? THIS...
...ISN'T RIGHT.
SECOND THOUGHTS?
I'M... NOT SURE.
NOT ABOUT WHAT I SAID, I STAND BY THAT, IT CAME FROM THE HEART.
I KNOW.
YEAH, YOU WOULD. YOU'RE THE TELEPATH. THE MIND'S YOUR SPECIAL PLAYGROUND.
SAME WENT FOR PROFESSOR XAVIER. ONLY-- I NEVER FELT AS EDGY AROUND HIM...
...AS I DO AROUND YOU.
DON'T YOU TRUST ME?
THE CONCLUSIONS I CAME TO...
...ARE JUSTIFIED.
THE CHOICES I'M MAKING...
...ARE THE RIGHT ONES.
SO YOU SAY.
SO WHY DO I FEEL...
...I'M BETRAYING...
...EVERY-THING AND EVERYONE...
...I HOLD DEAR...
NOT YOU, MY SWEET.
THAT'S THE CROSS I CHOOSE TO BEAR.
THEY'RE GONE!
ALL SAVE THE MENTAT!
WHAT'D YOU DO WITH 'EM, PSIWITCH?!
WHERE'D THEY GO?!?

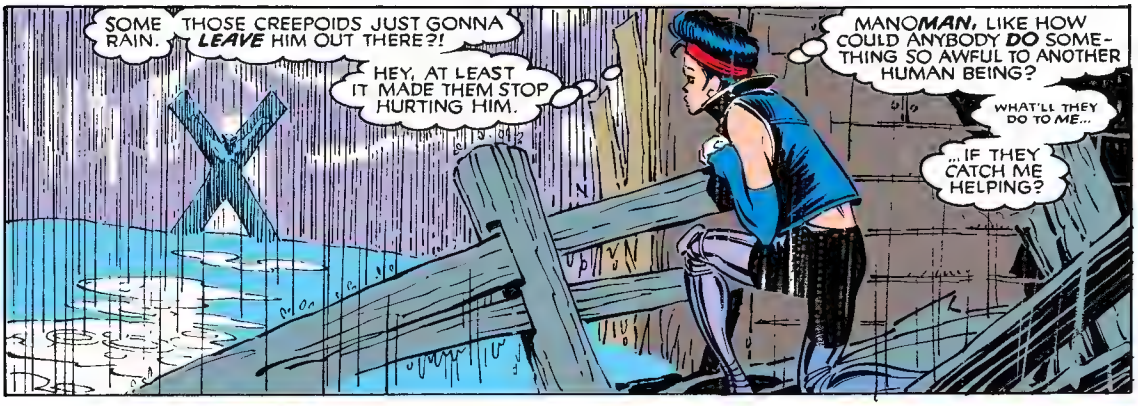
WHERE YOU CANNOT TOUCH THEM, REAVER.
YOU'LL KILL NO X-MEN TODAY.
CHINK!
SHE DID THIS!
PSYLOCKE USED HER TELEPATHY TO TRICK THE OTHERS THROUGH THE CRYSTAL!
GOLD STAR FOR YOU, BUNKIE!
KITTY-- YOUR VOICE--
--THE BROOD-QUEEN!
SUCH A SHAME YOUR INSIGHT...
... WILL NO MORE SAVE THEM...
...THAN IT WILL YOU!
CHOMP!

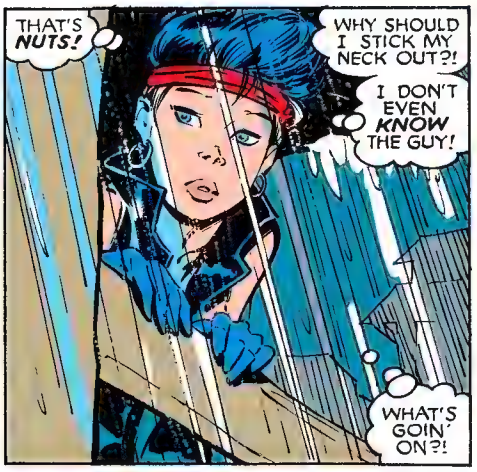
DREAM'S OVER.
BACK TO REALITY.
A LOVELY NIGHT, IS IT NOT?
POOR BOY, YOU DON'T SEEM TO BE ENJOYING IT.
PITY.
A MAN SHOULD SAVOR EVEN THE SMALLEST OF PLEASURES...
...WHEN ALL HE HAS TO LOOK FORWARD TO...
...IS THE MOST TERRIBLE OF PAIN.
THE ELEMENTS HAVE DONE THEIR WORST, LITTLE MAN.
NOW IT'S MY TURN.
WHAT'S HE TALKING--?!
NO!
Oh, NO!
NO!
NO!


SCREAM, CURSE YOU!
WHY WON'T YOU SCREAM?!
WHAT WILL IT TAKE TO MAKE YOU SCREAM?!!
BOSS.
WHAT?!?
SORRY TO INTRUDE...
...BUT THE WEATHER'S DETERIORATIN' IN A MAJOR WAY.
NEVER SCANNED A STORM LIKE THIS, BEST WE GET UNDER COVER AN' BATTEN DOWN.
A SENSIBLE SUGGESTION, BONEBREAKER.
I'VE DONE ENOUGH FOR ONE NIGHT.
THIS RESPITE, MUTANT, WILL GIVE YOU THE OPPORTUNITY TO RECOVER-- A LITTLE--
--AND REGAIN SUFFICIENT STRENGTH TO MAKE OUR NEXT SESSION...
...HURT EVEN MORE.
AS FOR YOUR COMPANIONS, WOLVERINE--
-- YOU WON'T BE FOLLOWING THEM...
SKASH!
...AND THEY WON'T EVER BE COMING BACK.
SKASH DOOM
YOU'RE MINE UNTIL YOU DIE!
AND THAT WON'T BE FOR A VERY LONG, LONG TIME.


IF I'M LUCKY...
... MAYBE LIGHTNING'LL STRIKE ME.
ARE YOU GIVING UP THEN, OLD FRIEND?
YOU GOT OBJECTIONS?
ALWAYS!
ARE YOU NOT THE ONE WHOSE CREED IS: WHILE I LIVE, I FIGHT!
MY PROBLEM, MY DECISION, ORORO, NOT YOURS. NOT ANYMORE!
THE DEVIL YOU SAY!
CERTAINLY NOT CHARACTERISTIC OF THE LOGAN I REMEMBER.
GIVE IT A REST, JEANIE.
YOU'RE DEAD, TOO.
Oops. SORRY. MY MISTAKE.
I MEANT TO SAY, YOU--THE JEAN GREY WHO WAS PHOENIX--NEVER REALLY EXISTED.
SO I GUESS I NEVER REALLY LOVED YOU.
CAN THE SAME BE SAID FOR ME?
OR IS IT THAT YOU ARE NO LONGER WORTHY OF THE HONOR SWORD OF CLAN YASHIDA...
...AND MY LOVE?
FLAMIN' BROADS--WHAT D'YOU ALL WANT FROM ME?!
YOUR LIFE, CHUM!
YOU SAVED ME FROM THE KGB-- AGAINST IMPOSSIBLE ODDS-- WHEN EVERYONE ELSE HAD ABANDONED ME.
DIFFERENT TIME, DANVERS. DIFFERENT MAN.
YOU'RE A GHOST-- YOU'RE ALL GHOSTS-- DREAMS, PHANTOMS, NOTHIN'!
SO JUST SHUT UP AN' LEAVE ME ALONE!
IT'S OVER, DON'T'CHA SEE-- I'M DONE!

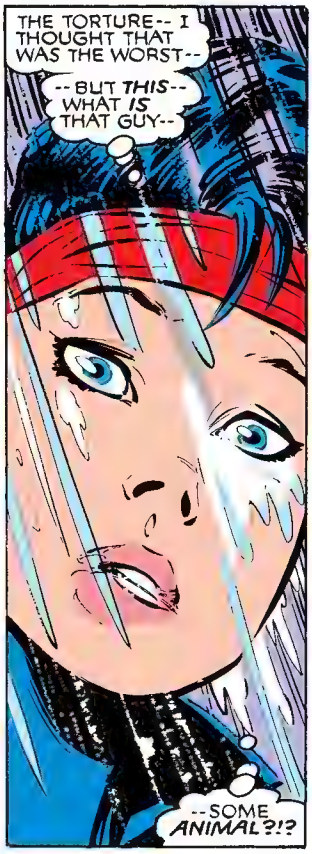
IF THAT IS TRUE, LOGAN...
...THEN SO AM I.
NEVER KNOWN WEATHER LIKE THIS.
WONDER SUDDENLY IF STORM REALLY IS A GODDESS...
...AN' THIS HER WAY OF SHOWING SHE'S REALLY ANGRY.
KBOOM
CAN'T HELP LAUGHIN'.
I MEAN, SHE'S DEAD, RIGHT?
SHOT DOWN BY HAVOK.
SO HOW COME I'M SEEIN' HER--OF ALL MY PHANTOMS-- AS A LITTLE KID?
KISS KISS HUG HUG?
ON PERIL OF YOUR LIFE, PRETTY BOY.
BE WARNED, LADY DEATHSTRIKE...
...I'M A MAN WHO RISES TO A CHALLENGE.
THEN BY ALL MEANS...
...TAKE THE RISK.
REPORTS OF UNSEASONABLE GALES FROM ACROSS THE GLOBE...
...TORRENTIAL RAIN... HURRICANE-FORCE WINDS... FLOODS...
...THE WORST CENTERED AROUND THE CITY OF CAIRO, ILLINOIS...
END OF THE WORLD, I BET.
YOU WISH, COLE. BET OR FOLD.
HAWHRHR!
BE A ROYAL CROCK, DON'T'CHA THINK...
...IF THAT LITTLE MUTIE SHRIMP WENT AN' GOT HIMSELF DROWNED.
NO, BONEBREAKER, I DO NOT THINK.
SPEAK SO AGAIN...
...AND YOU CAN JOIN HIM...
...TO SHARE HIS FATE.


SOME RAIN.
THOSE CREEPOIDS JUST GONNA *LEAVE* HIM OUT THERE?!
HEY, AT LEAST IT MADE THEM STOP HURTING HIM.
MANO*MAN*, LIKE HOW COULD ANYBODY *DO* SOMETHING SO AWFUL TO ANOTHER HUMAN BEING?
WHAT'LL THEY DO TO ME...
...IF THEY CATCH ME HELPING?


THAT'S *NUTS!*
WHY SHOULD I STICK MY NECK OUT?!
I DON'T EVEN *KNOW* THE GUY!
WHAT'S GOIN' ON?!

I WANT TO SCREAM.
THAT'S GOOD.
I GIVE IT ALL THE VOICE I GOT LEFT.

*W*HO'S TO HEAR, THROUGH ALL THE THUNDER?
*P*AIN'S A GOAD.
*M*AKES ME MAD, MAKES ME *CRAZY.*


THE TORTURE-- I THOUGHT THAT WAS THE WORST--
--BUT *THIS*-- WHAT *IS* THAT GUY--
--SOME *ANIMAL*?!?

*O*NLY THE *BERSERKER* IN MY SOUL CAN SAVE ME NOW.
BRAOUMM
*E*ITHER I DIE...
...OR I WIN *FREE!*

ONE ARM.
THEN TWO!
PROB'LY AN EASIER WAY TO DO THIS.
WHO FLAMIN' CARES!
THUNDER--
LIGHTNING--
--STOP IT
STOP IT
STOP IT!
GEEZ LOU-EEZ!
HE'S FREE! I GOTTA--
--WHAT?
LOOK OUT FOR NUMBER ONE, THAT'S THE SMART SURVIVOR'S PLAY.
BUT HE'S HURT!
AN' YOU DON'T WANNA END UP THE SAME WAY!
HE NEEDS HELP!
WHAT'S HE TO YA?
IF THOSE GUYS GET THEIR HANDS ON HIM AGAIN...
IF THEY GET THEIR HANDS ON ME--?!?
HE SAW ME, HE KNOWS I'M HERE!
SO, KID--
--YOU GONNA GIVE A FELLA A HAND, OR WHAT?
TO BE CONTINUED...

MARVEL®
THE UNCANNY
X-MEN®
TM
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$1.00 US
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252
MID NOV
02461
APPROVED BY THE COMICS CODE
AUTHORITY
NOW ON SALE TWICE A MONTH!

WHERE'S WOLVERINE?!?
HIS NAME IS DONALD PIERCE--
--CYBORG, DEPOSED WHITE KING OF THE INFAMOUS HELLFIRE CLUB, NOW LEADER OF A BAND OF ASSASSINS, THE REAVERS.
HE IS NOT AMUSED.
A STAN LEE PRESENTATION
STARRING THE LAST OF THE UNCANNY X-MEN
CHRIS CLAREMONT
WRITER
RICK LEONARDI
GUEST PENCILER
KENT WILLIAMS
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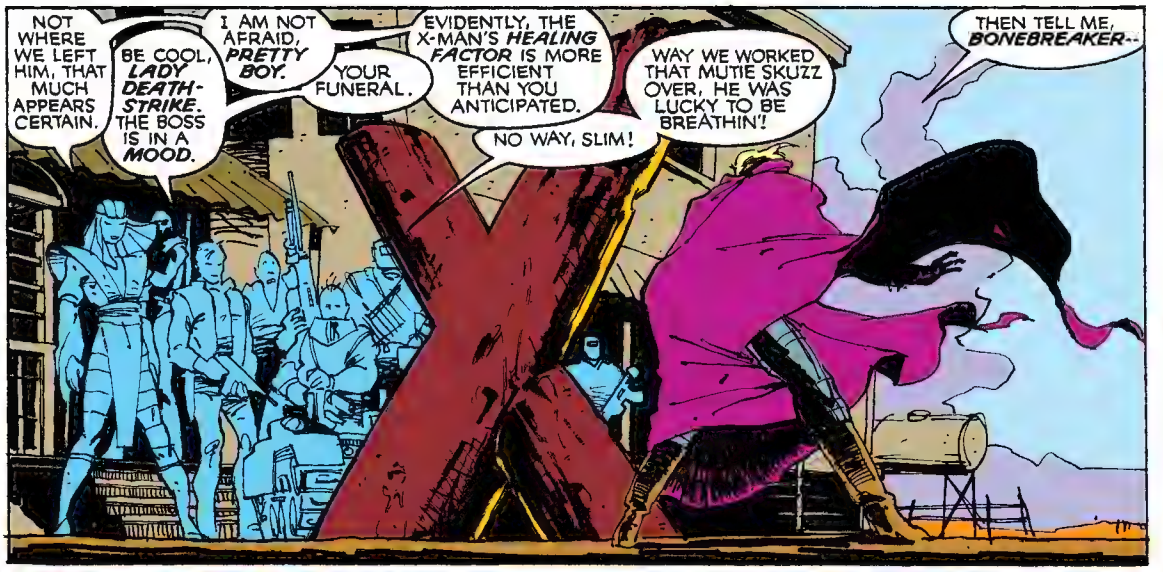
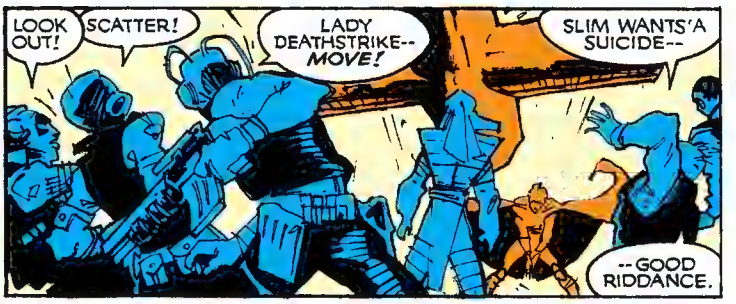
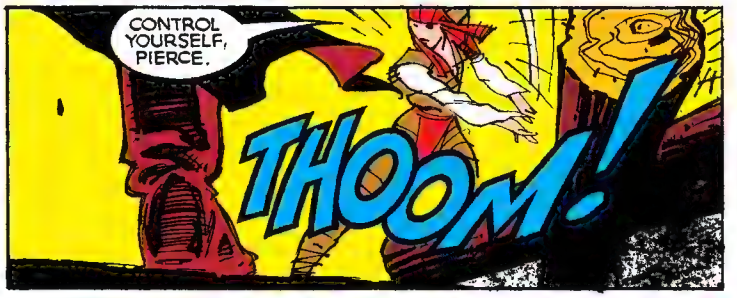
TOM DeFALCO
OVERLORD


NOT WHERE WE LEFT HIM, THAT MUCH APPEARS CERTAIN.
BE COOL, LADY DEATH-STRIKE. THE BOSS IS IN A MOOD.
I AM NOT AFRAID, PRETTY BOY.
YOUR FUNERAL.
EVIDENTLY, THE X-MAN'S HEALING FACTOR IS MORE EFFICIENT THAN YOU ANTICIPATED.
NO WAY, SLIM!
WAY WE WORKED THAT MUTIE SKUZZ OVER, HE WAS LUCKY TO BE BREATHIN'!
THEN TELL ME, BONEBREAKER--

--WHERE HE'S GONE?!!
RRRAKT!

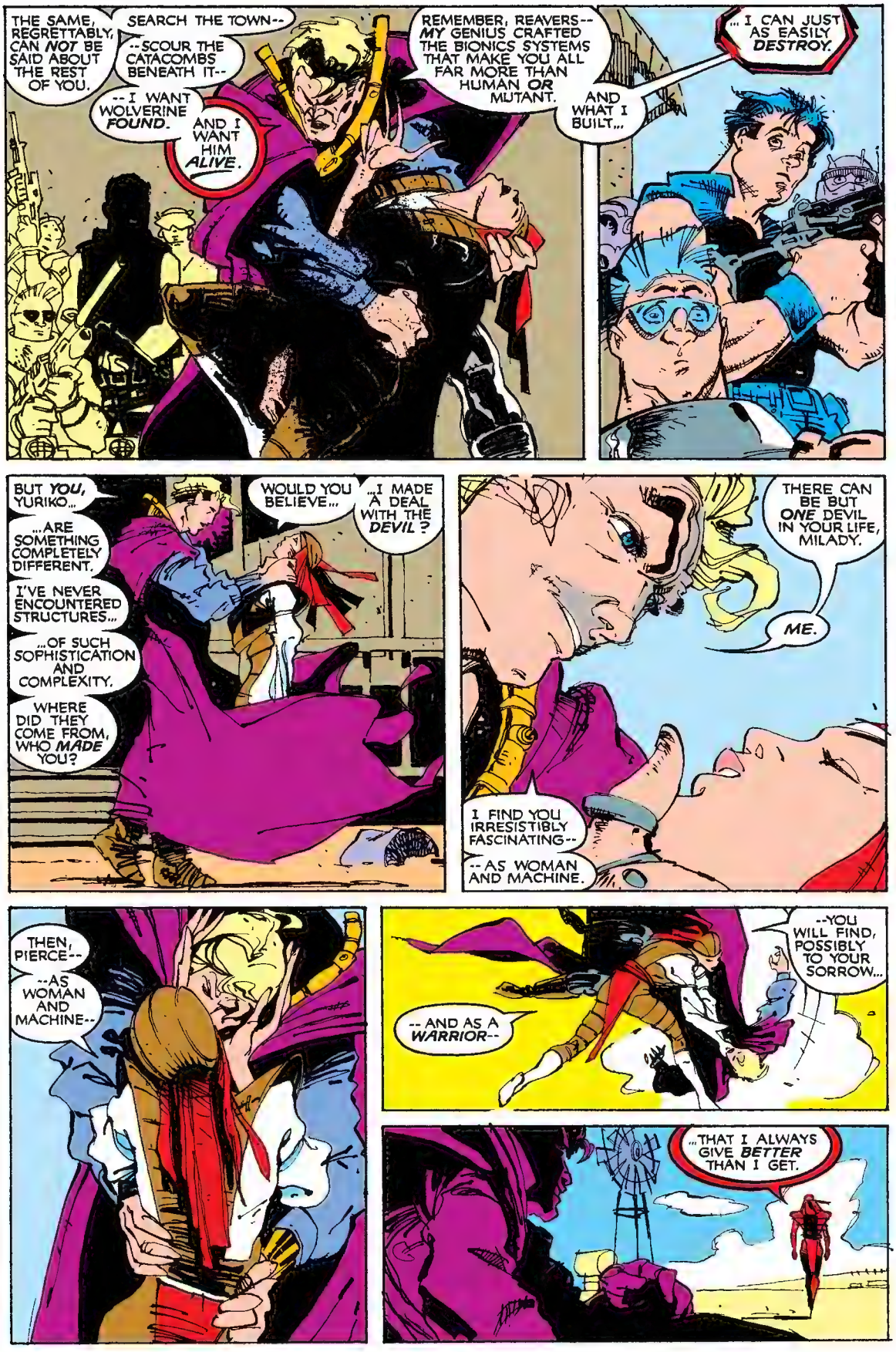

LOOK OUT!
SCATTER!
LADY DEATHSTRIKE-- MOVE!
SLIM WANTS'A SUICIDE--
--GOOD RIDDANCE.

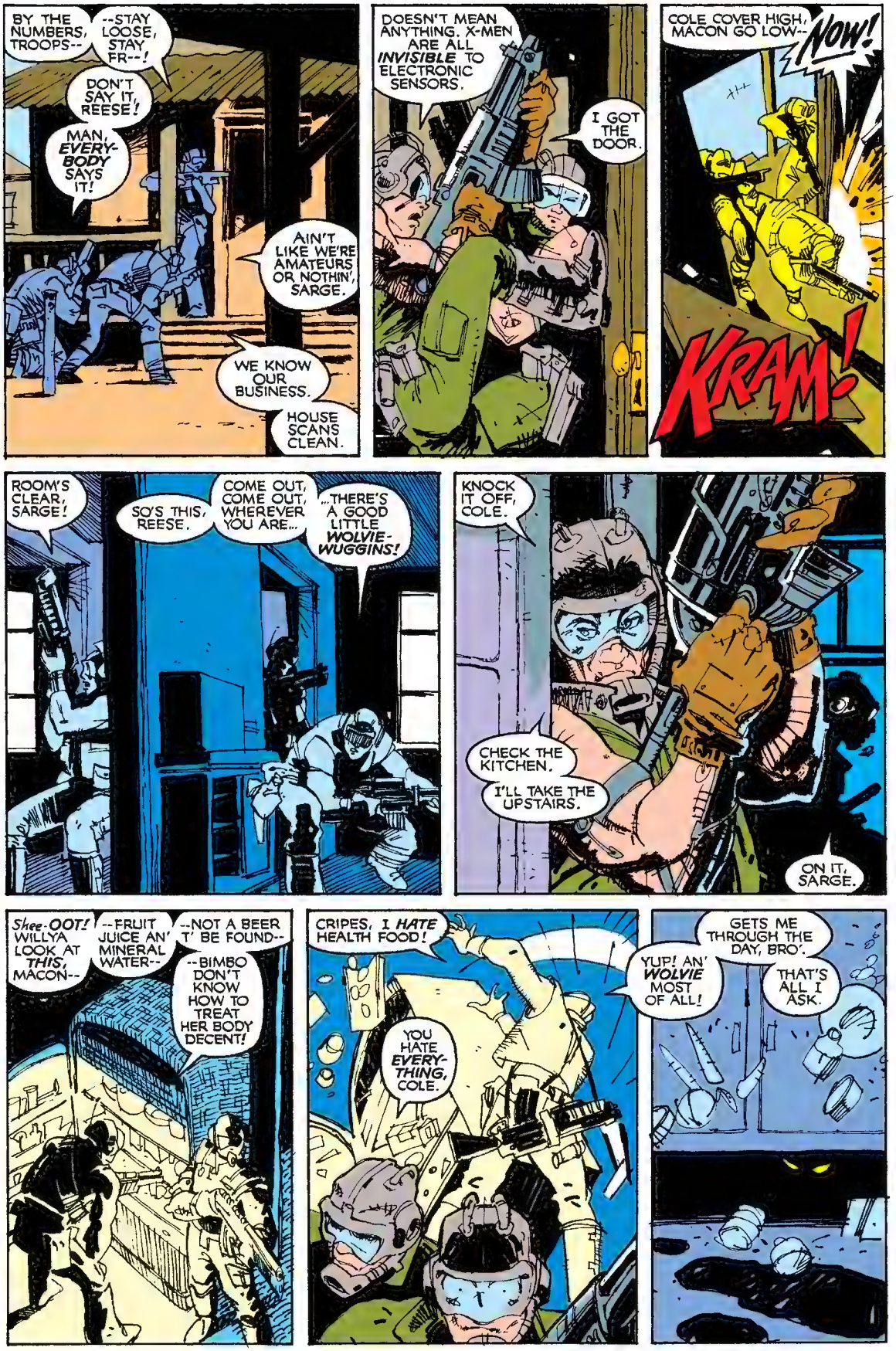

CONTROL YOURSELF, PIERCE.
THOOM!

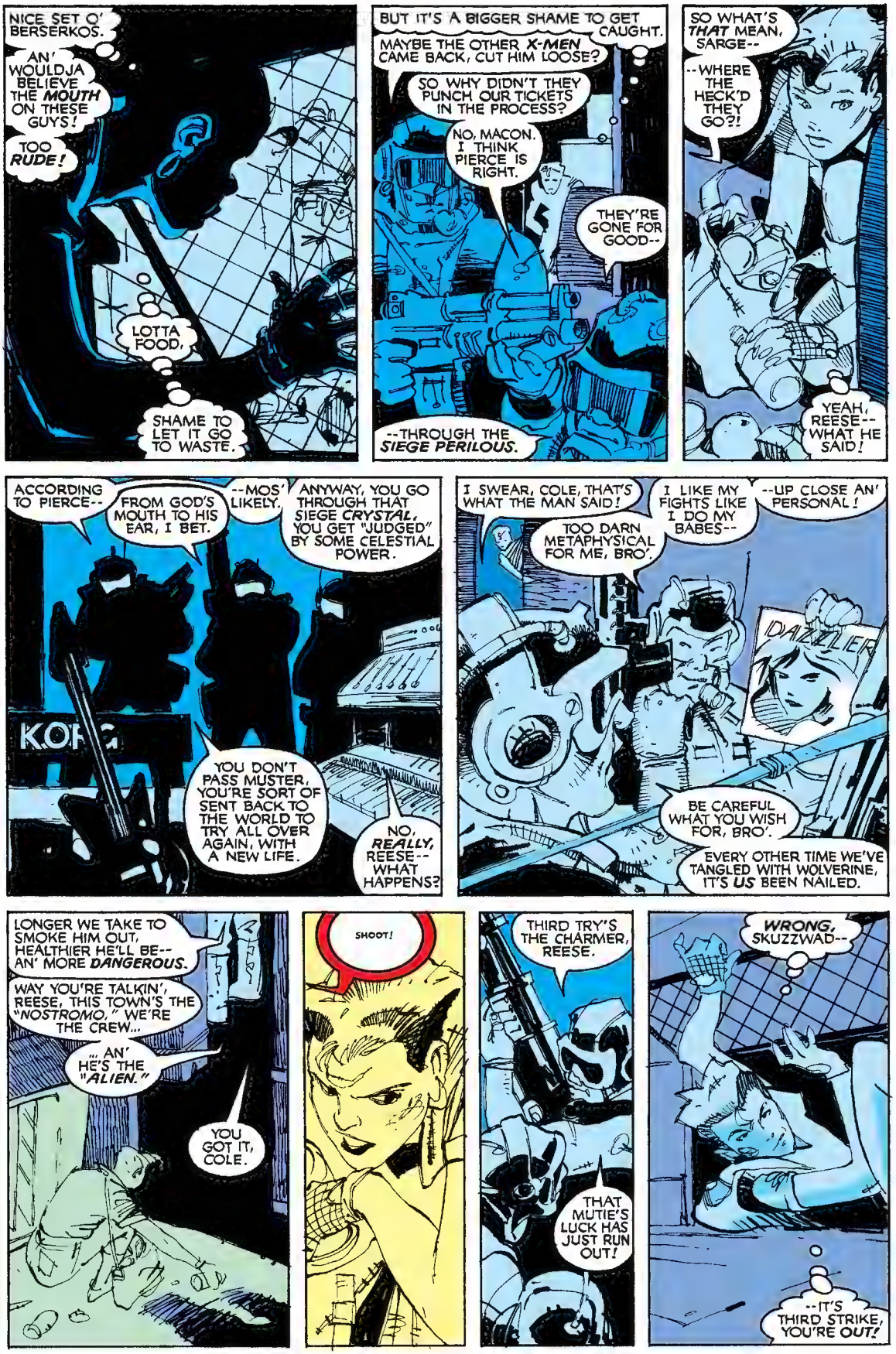
SUCH A DISPLAY IS UNSEEMLY...
...IN A LEADER OF MEN.
YOU DARE DEFY ME, WOMAN!

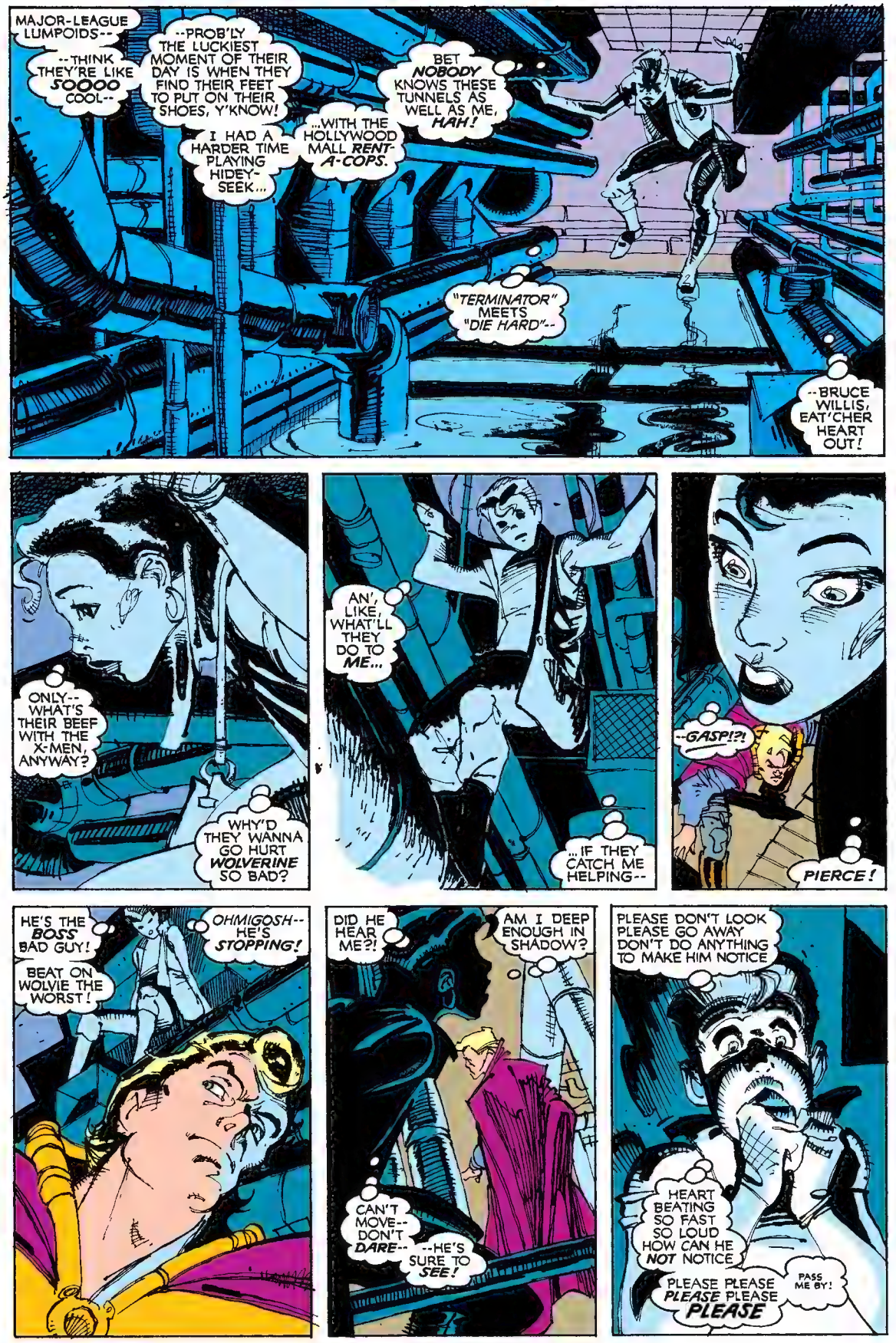
MY LIFE MAY BE YOURS FOR THE TAKING, LORD.
BUT IF SO--
--I SHALL NOT DIE ALONE!

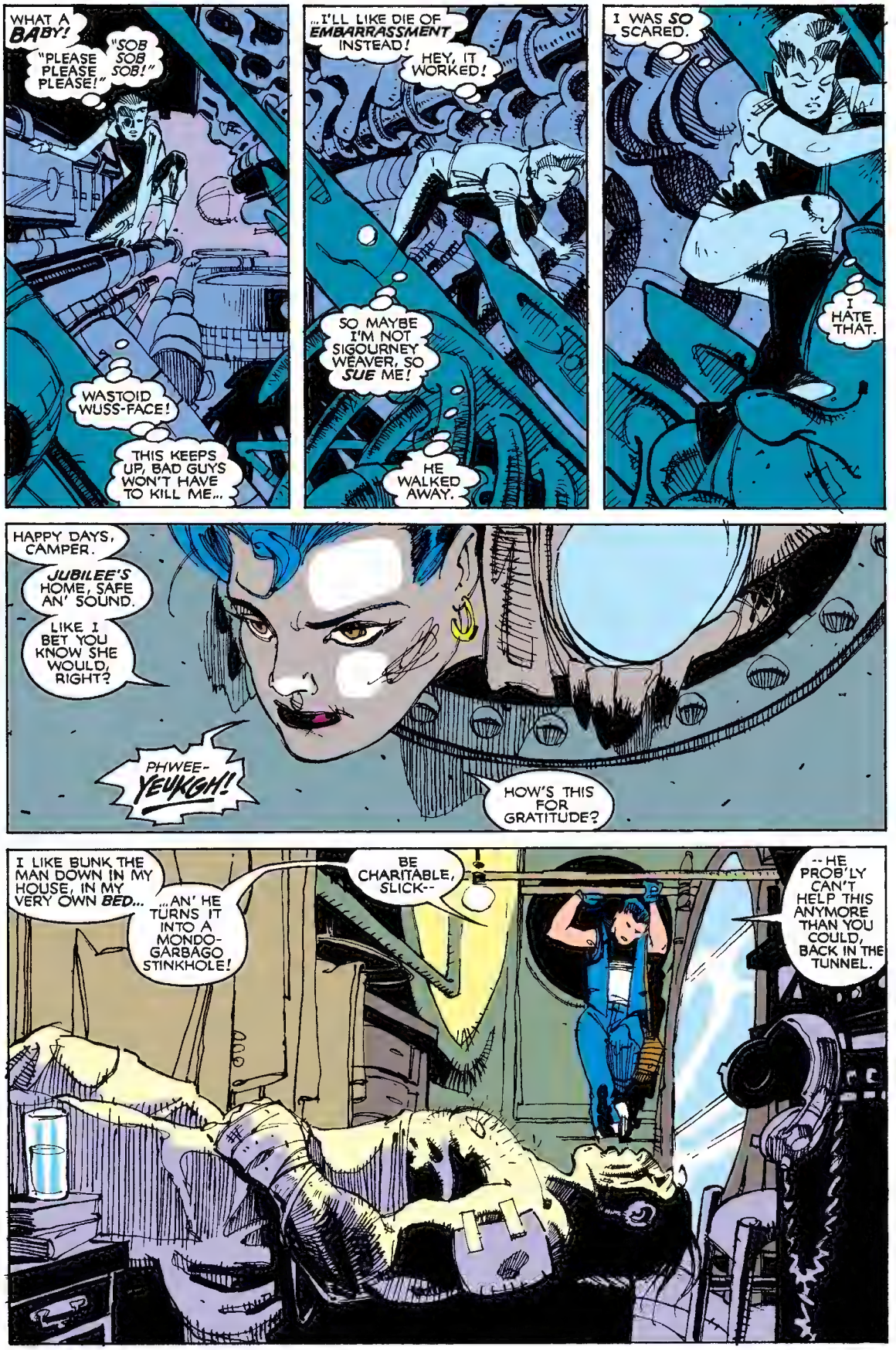
COURAGE AND SPIRIT--
--I LIKE THAT!
BY THE ETERNAL--
--I LIKE YOU!

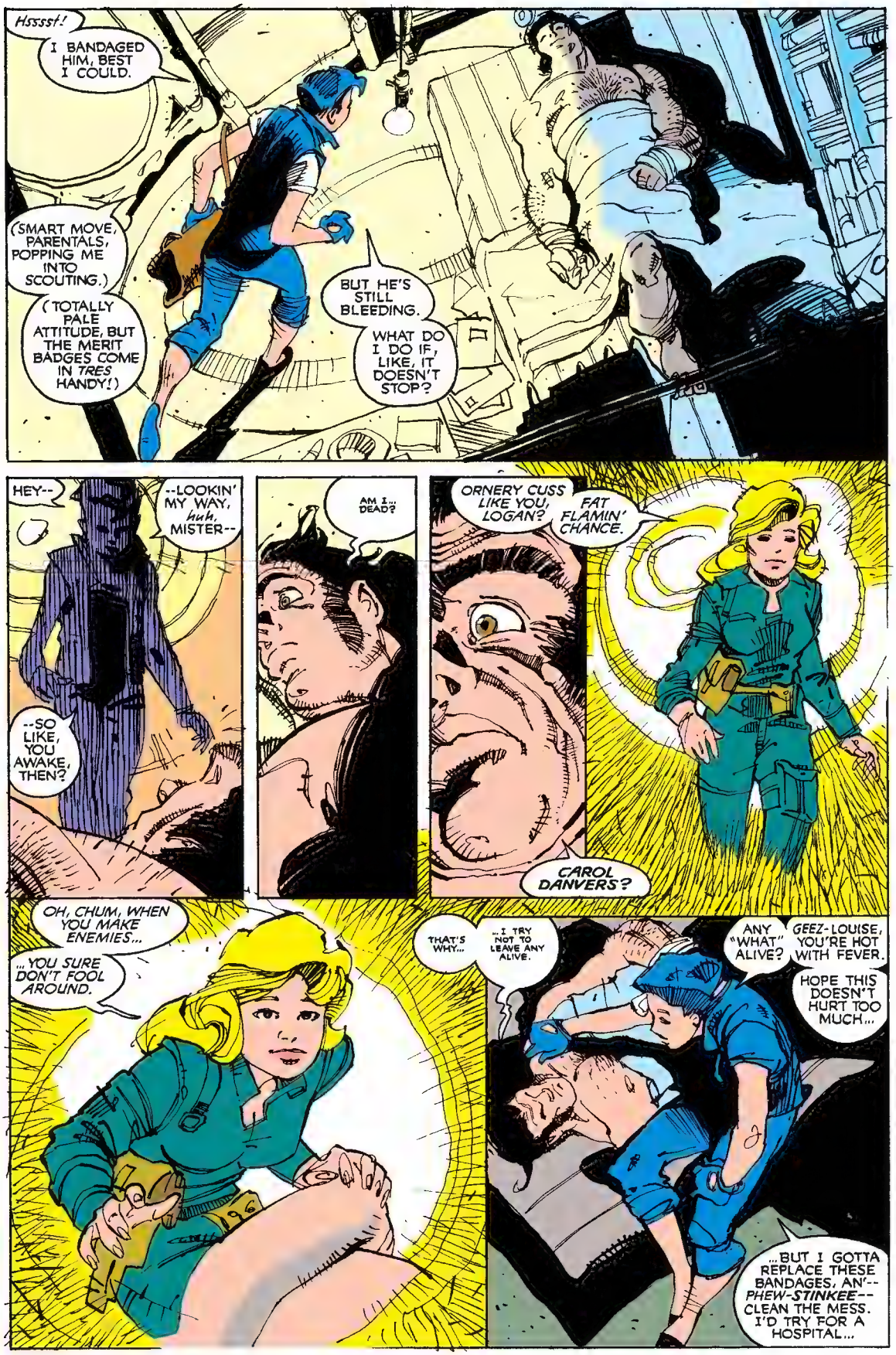

THE SAME, REGRETTABLY, CAN NOT BE SAID ABOUT THE REST OF YOU.
SEARCH THE TOWN--
--SCOUR THE CATACOMBS BENEATH IT--
--I WANT WOLVERINE FOUND.
AND I WANT HIM ALIVE.
REMEMBER, REAVERS-- MY GENIUS CRAFTED THE BIONICS SYSTEMS THAT MAKE YOU ALL FAR MORE THAN HUMAN OR MUTANT.
AND WHAT I BUILT...
...I CAN JUST AS EASILY DESTROY.
BUT YOU, YURIKO...
...ARE SOMETHING COMPLETELY DIFFERENT.
I'VE NEVER ENCOUNTERED STRUCTURES...
...OF SUCH SOPHISTICATION AND COMPLEXITY.
WHERE DID THEY COME FROM, WHO MADE YOU?
WOULD YOU BELIEVE...
...I MADE A DEAL WITH THE DEVIL?
THERE CAN BE BUT ONE DEVIL IN YOUR LIFE, MILADY.
ME.
I FIND YOU IRRESISTIBLY FASCINATING--
--AS WOMAN AND MACHINE.
THEN, PIERCE--
--AS WOMAN AND MACHINE--
--AND AS A WARRIOR--
--YOU WILL FIND, POSSIBLY TO YOUR SORROW...
...THAT I ALWAYS GIVE BETTER THAN I GET.

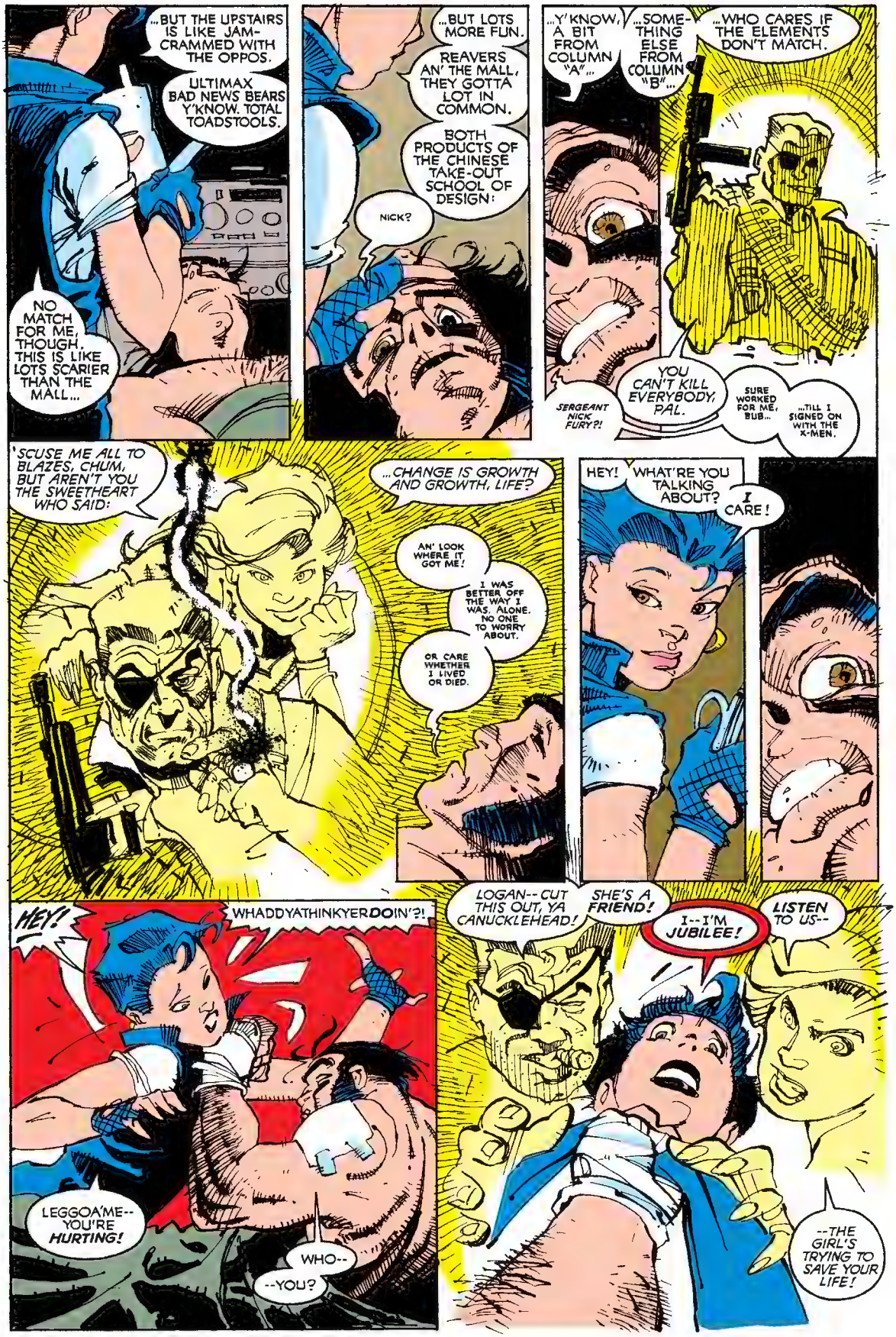

BY THE NUMBERS, TROOPS--
--STAY LOOSE, STAY FR--!
DON'T SAY IT, REESE!
MAN, EVERY-BODY SAYS IT!
AIN'T LIKE WE'RE AMATEURS OR NOTHIN', SARGE.
WE KNOW OUR BUSINESS.
HOUSE SCANS CLEAN.
DOESN'T MEAN ANYTHING. X-MEN ARE ALL INVISIBLE TO ELECTRONIC SENSORS.
I GOT THE DOOR.
COLE COVER HIGH, MACON GO LOW--
NOW!
KRAM!
ROOM'S CLEAR, SARGE!
SO'S THIS, REESE.
COME OUT, COME OUT, WHEREVER YOU ARE...
...THERE'S A GOOD LITTLE WOLVIE-WUGGINS!
KNOCK IT OFF, COLE.
CHECK THE KITCHEN.
I'LL TAKE THE UPSTAIRS.
ON IT, SARGE.
Shee-OOT! WILLYA LOOK AT THIS, MACON--
--FRUIT JUICE AN' MINERAL WATER--
--NOT A BEER T' BE FOUND--
--BIMBO DON'T KNOW HOW TO TREAT HER BODY DECENT!
CRIPES, I HATE HEALTH FOOD!
YOU HATE EVERY-THING, COLE.
GETS ME THROUGH THE DAY, BRO'.
YUP! AN' WOLVIE MOST OF ALL!
THAT'S ALL I ASK.

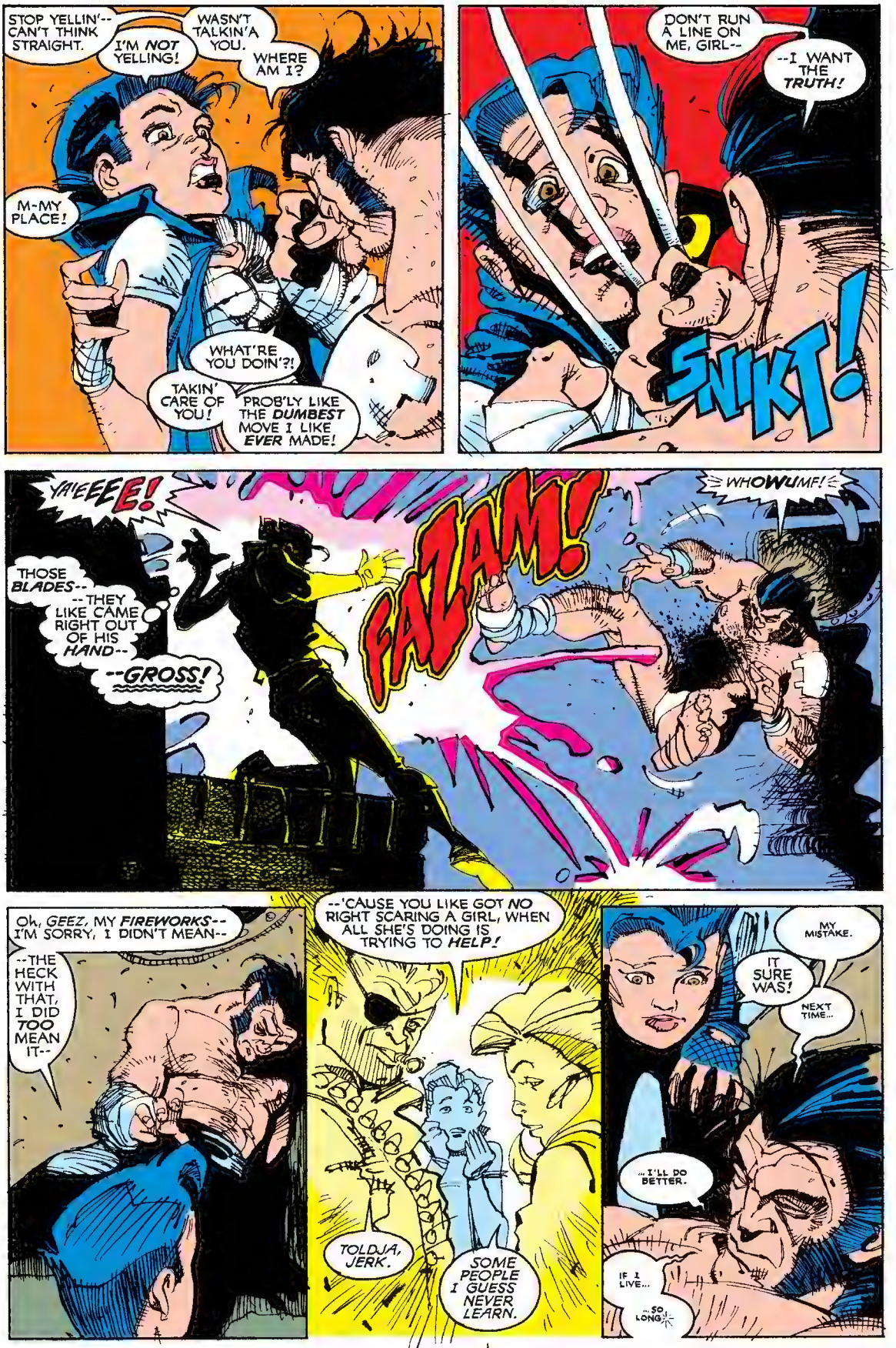

NICE SET O' BERSERKOS.
AN' WOULDJA BELIEVE THE MOUTH ON THESE GUYS!
TOO RUDE!
LOTTA FOOD,
SHAME TO LET IT GO TO WASTE.
BUT IT'S A BIGGER SHAME TO GET CAUGHT.
MAYBE THE OTHER X-MEN CAME BACK, CUT HIM LOOSE?
SO WHY DIDN'T THEY PUNCH OUR TICKETS IN THE PROCESS?
NO, MACON. I THINK PIERCE IS RIGHT.
THEY'RE GONE FOR GOOD--
--THROUGH THE SIEGE PERILOUS.
SO WHAT'S THAT MEAN, SARGE--
--WHERE THE HECK'D THEY GO?!
YEAH, REESE--WHAT HE SAID!
ACCORDING TO PIERCE--
FROM GOD'S MOUTH TO HIS EAR, I BET.
--MOS' LIKELY.
ANYWAY, YOU GO THROUGH THAT SIEGE CRYSTAL, YOU GET "JUDGED" BY SOME CELESTIAL POWER.
YOU DON'T PASS MUSTER, YOU'RE SORT OF SENT BACK TO THE WORLD TO TRY ALL OVER AGAIN, WITH A NEW LIFE.
NO, REALLY, REESE--WHAT HAPPENS?
I SWEAR, COLE, THAT'S WHAT THE MAN SAID!
TOO DARN METAPHYSICAL FOR ME, BRO'.
I LIKE MY FIGHTS LIKE I DO MY BABES--
--UP CLOSE AN' PERSONAL!
DAZZLER
BE CAREFUL WHAT YOU WISH FOR, BRO'.
EVERY OTHER TIME WE'VE TANGLED WITH WOLVERINE, IT'S US BEEN NAILED.
LONGER WE TAKE TO SMOKE HIM OUT, HEALTHIER HE'LL BE--AN' MORE DANGEROUS.
WAY YOU'RE TALKIN', REESE, THIS TOWN'S THE "NOSTROMO," WE'RE THE CREW...
... AN' HE'S THE "ALIEN."
YOU GOT IT, COLE.
SHOOT!
THIRD TRY'S THE CHARMER, REESE.
THAT MUTIE'S LUCK HAS JUST RUN OUT!
WRONG, SKUZZWAD--
--IT'S THIRD STRIKE, YOU'RE OUT!

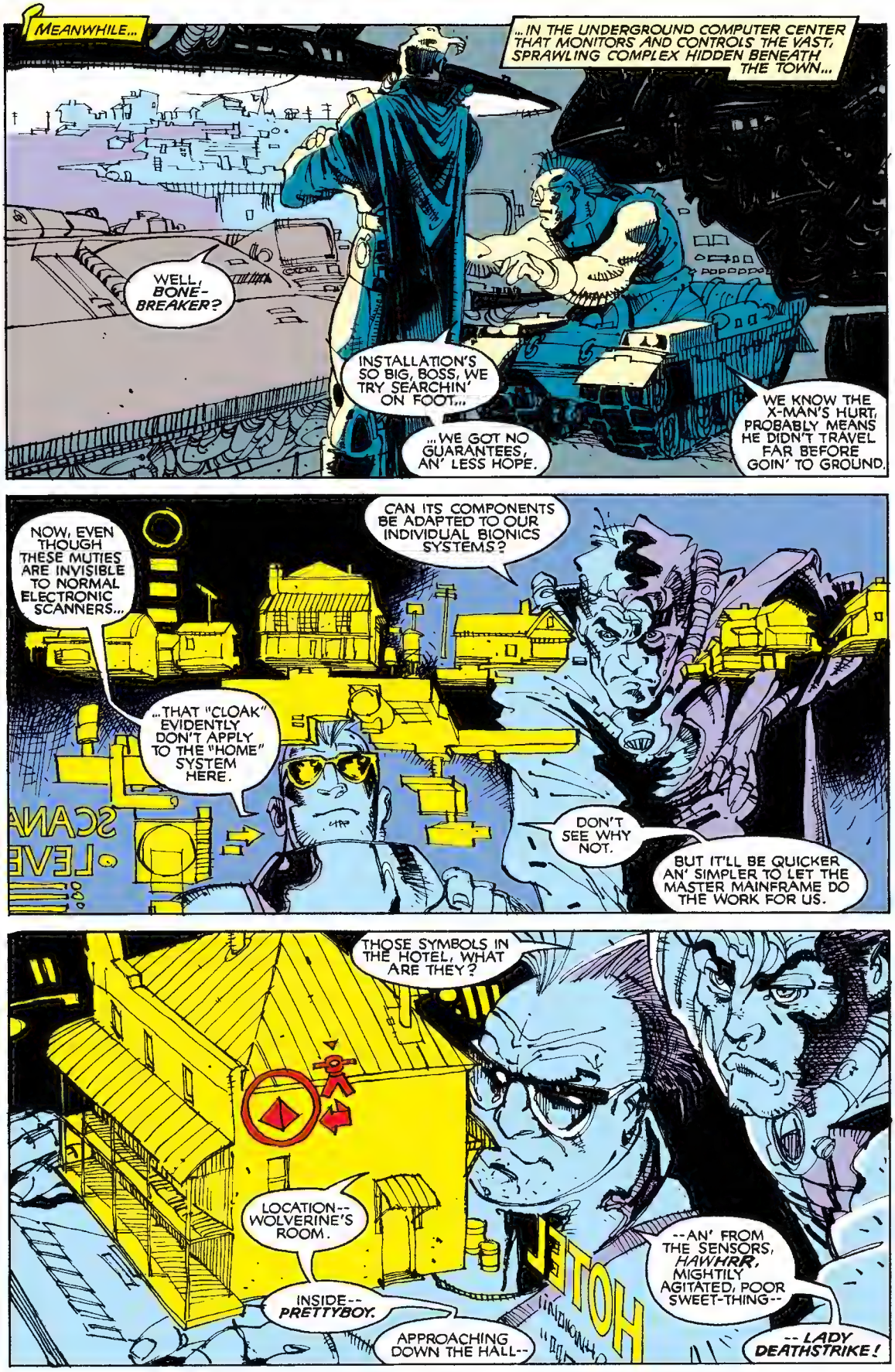

MAJOR-LEAGUE LUMPOIDS--
--THINK THEY'RE LIKE SOOOO COOL--
--PROB'LY THE LUCKIEST MOMENT OF THEIR DAY IS WHEN THEY FIND THEIR FEET TO PUT ON THEIR SHOES, Y'KNOW!
I HAD A HARDER TIME PLAYING HIDEY-SEEK...
...WITH THE HOLLYWOOD MALL RENT-A-COPS.
BET NOBODY KNOWS THESE TUNNELS AS WELL AS ME, HAH!
"TERMINATOR" MEETS "DIE HARD"--
--BRUCE WILLIS, EAT'CHER HEART OUT!
ONLY-- WHAT'S THEIR BEEF WITH THE X-MEN, ANYWAY?
WHY'D THEY WANNA GO HURT WOLVERINE SO BAD?
AN', LIKE, WHAT'LL THEY DO TO ME...
...IF THEY CATCH ME HELPING--
--GASP!?!
PIERCE!
HE'S THE BOSS' BAD GUY!
BEAT ON WOLVIE THE WORST!
OHMIGOSH-- HE'S STOPPING!
DID HE HEAR ME?!
AM I DEEP ENOUGH IN SHADOW?
CAN'T MOVE-- DON'T DARE--
--HE'S SURE TO SEE!
PLEASE DON'T LOOK PLEASE GO AWAY DON'T DO ANYTHING TO MAKE HIM NOTICE
HEART BEATING SO FAST SO LOUD HOW CAN HE NOT NOTICE
PLEASE PLEASE PLEASE PLEASE
PASS ME BY!

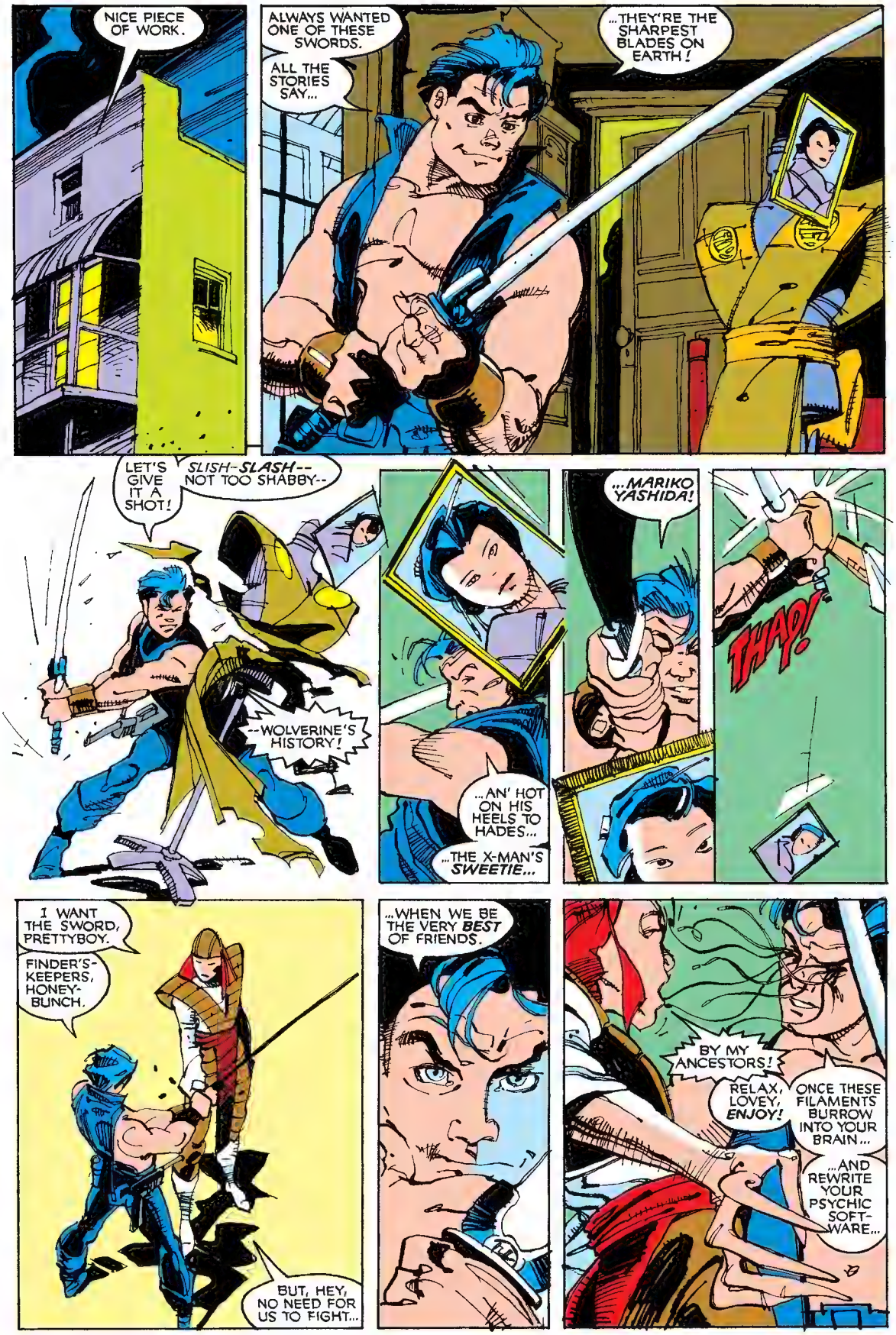

WHAT A BABY!
"PLEASE PLEASE PLEASE!"
"SOB SOB SOB!"
WASTOID WUSS-FACE!
THIS KEEPS UP, BAD GUYS WON'T HAVE TO KILL ME...
...I'LL LIKE DIE OF EMBARRASSMENT INSTEAD!
HEY, IT WORKED!
SO MAYBE I'M NOT SIGOURNEY WEAVER, SO SUE ME!
HE WALKED AWAY.
I WAS SO SCARED.
I HATE THAT.
HAPPY DAYS, CAMPER.
JUBILEE'S HOME, SAFE AN' SOUND.
LIKE I BET YOU KNOW SHE WOULD, RIGHT?
PHWEE- YEUKGH!
HOW'S THIS FOR GRATITUDE?
I LIKE BUNK THE MAN DOWN IN MY HOUSE, IN MY VERY OWN BED...
...AN' HE TURNS IT INTO A MONDO-GARBAGO STINKHOLE!
BE CHARITABLE, SLICK--
--HE PROB'LY CAN'T HELP THIS ANYMORE THAN YOU COULD, BACK IN THE TUNNEL.

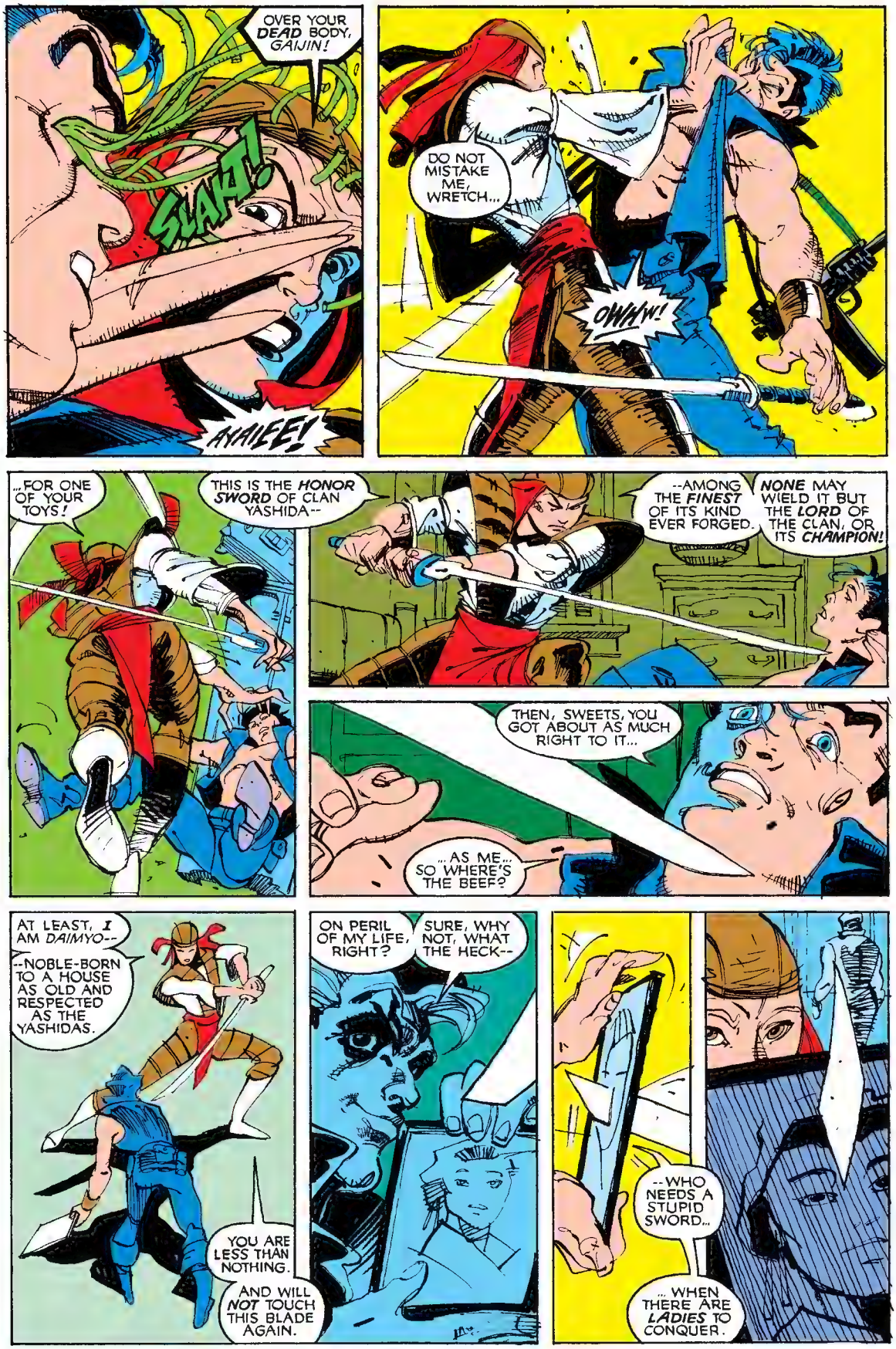

Hssssf!
I BANDAGED HIM, BEST I COULD.
(SMART MOVE, PARENTALS, POPPING ME INTO SCOUTING.)
(TOTALLY PALE ATTITUDE, BUT THE MERIT BADGES COME IN *TRES* HANDY!)
BUT HE'S STILL BLEEDING.
WHAT DO I DO IF, LIKE, IT DOESN'T STOP?
HEY--
--LOOKIN' MY WAY, *huh,* MISTER--
--SO LIKE, YOU AWAKE, THEN?
AM I... DEAD?
ORNERY CUSS LIKE YOU, LOGAN?
FAT FLAMIN' CHANCE.
CAROL DANVERS?
OH, CHUM, WHEN YOU MAKE ENEMIES...
...YOU SURE DON'T FOOL AROUND.
THAT'S WHY...
...I TRY NOT TO LEAVE ANY ALIVE.
ANY "WHAT" ALIVE?
GEEZ-LOUISE, YOU'RE HOT WITH FEVER.
HOPE THIS DOESN'T HURT TOO MUCH...
...BUT I GOTTA REPLACE THESE BANDAGES, AN'-- *PHEW-STINKEE*-- CLEAN THE MESS. I'D TRY FOR A HOSPITAL...

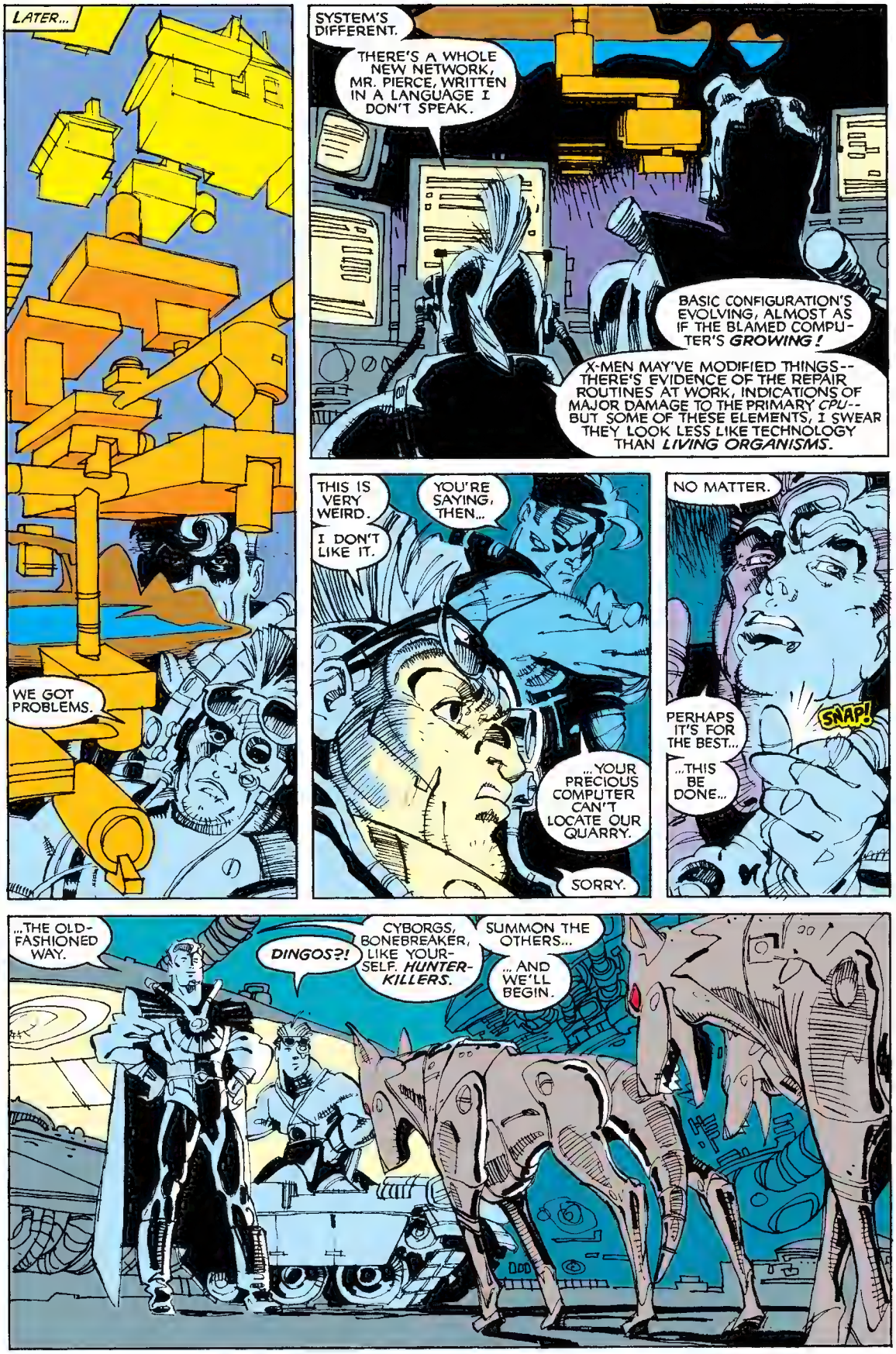

...BUT THE UPSTAIRS IS LIKE JAM-CRAMMED WITH THE OPPOS.
ULTIMAX BAD NEWS BEARS Y'KNOW. TOTAL TOADSTOOLS.
NO MATCH FOR ME, THOUGH. THIS IS LIKE LOTS SCARIER THAN THE MALL...
...BUT LOTS MORE FUN.
REAVERS AN' THE MALL, THEY GOTTA LOT IN COMMON.
BOTH PRODUCTS OF THE CHINESE TAKE-OUT SCHOOL OF DESIGN:
NICK?
...Y'KNOW, A BIT FROM COLUMN "A"...
...SOME-THING ELSE FROM COLUMN "B"...
...WHO CARES IF THE ELEMENTS DON'T MATCH.
SERGEANT NICK FURY?!
YOU CAN'T KILL EVERYBODY, PAL.
SURE WORKED FOR ME, BUB...
...TILL I SIGNED ON WITH THE X-MEN.
'SCUSE ME ALL TO BLAZES, CHUM, BUT AREN'T YOU THE SWEETHEART WHO SAID:
...CHANGE IS GROWTH AND GROWTH, LIFE?
AN' LOOK WHERE IT GOT ME!
I WAS BETTER OFF THE WAY I WAS. ALONE. NO ONE TO WORRY ABOUT.
OR CARE WHETHER I LIVED OR DIED.
HEY!
WHAT'RE YOU TALKING ABOUT?
I CARE!
HEY!
WHADDYATHINKYERDOIN'?!
LEGGOA'ME-- YOU'RE HURTING!
WHO--
--YOU?
LOGAN-- CUT THIS OUT, YA CANUCKLEHEAD!
SHE'S A FRIEND!
I--I'M JUBILEE!
LISTEN TO US--
--THE GIRL'S TRYING TO SAVE YOUR LIFE!


STOP YELLIN'-- CAN'T THINK STRAIGHT.
I'M NOT YELLING!
WASN'T TALKIN'A YOU.
WHERE AM I?
M-MY PLACE!
WHAT'RE YOU DOIN'?!
TAKIN' CARE OF YOU!
PROB'LY LIKE THE DUMBEST MOVE I LIKE EVER MADE!
DON'T RUN A LINE ON ME, GIRL--
--I WANT THE TRUTH!
SNIKT!
YAIEEEE!
THOSE BLADES--
--THEY LIKE CAME RIGHT OUT OF HIS HAND--
--GROSS!
FAZAM!
WHOWUMF!
Oh, GEEZ, MY FIREWORKS-- I'M SORRY, I DIDN'T MEAN--
--THE HECK WITH THAT, I DID TOO MEAN IT--
--'CAUSE YOU LIKE GOT NO RIGHT SCARING A GIRL, WHEN ALL SHE'S DOING IS TRYING TO HELP!
TOLDJA, JERK.
SOME PEOPLE I GUESS NEVER LEARN.
MY MISTAKE.
IT SURE WAS!
NEXT TIME...
...I'LL DO BETTER.
IF I LIVE...
...SO LONG!


MEANWHILE...
...IN THE UNDERGROUND COMPUTER CENTER THAT MONITORS AND CONTROLS THE VAST, SPRAWLING COMPLEX HIDDEN BENEATH THE TOWN...
WELL, BONE-BREAKER?
INSTALLATION'S SO BIG, BOSS, WE TRY SEARCHIN' ON FOOT...
...WE GOT NO GUARANTEES, AN' LESS HOPE.
WE KNOW THE X-MAN'S HURT, PROBABLY MEANS HE DIDN'T TRAVEL FAR BEFORE GOIN' TO GROUND.
NOW, EVEN THOUGH THESE MUTIES ARE INVISIBLE TO NORMAL ELECTRONIC SCANNERS...
...THAT "CLOAK" EVIDENTLY DON'T APPLY TO THE "HOME" SYSTEM HERE.
CAN ITS COMPONENTS BE ADAPTED TO OUR INDIVIDUAL BIONICS SYSTEMS?
DON'T SEE WHY NOT.
BUT IT'LL BE QUICKER AN' SIMPLER TO LET THE MASTER MAINFRAME DO THE WORK FOR US.
THOSE SYMBOLS IN THE HOTEL, WHAT ARE THEY?
LOCATION-- WOLVERINE'S ROOM.
INSIDE-- PRETTYBOY.
APPROACHING DOWN THE HALL--
--AN' FROM THE SENSORS, HAWHRR, MIGHTILY AGITATED, POOR SWEET-THING--
-- LADY DEATHSTRIKE!
HOTEL


NICE PIECE OF WORK.
ALWAYS WANTED ONE OF THESE SWORDS.
ALL THE STORIES SAY...
...THEY'RE THE SHARPEST BLADES ON EARTH!
LET'S GIVE IT A SHOT!
SLISH-SLASH--
NOT TOO SHABBY--
--WOLVERINE'S HISTORY!
...AN' HOT ON HIS HEELS TO HADES...
...THE X-MAN'S SWEETIE...
...MARIKO YASHIDA!
THAP!
I WANT THE SWORD, PRETTYBOY.
FINDER'S-KEEPERS, HONEY-BUNCH.
BUT, HEY, NO NEED FOR US TO FIGHT...
...WHEN WE BE THE VERY BEST OF FRIENDS.
BY MY ANCESTORS!
RELAX, LOVEY, ENJOY!
ONCE THESE FILAMENTS BURROW INTO YOUR BRAIN...
...AND REWRITE YOUR PSYCHIC SOFT-WARE...

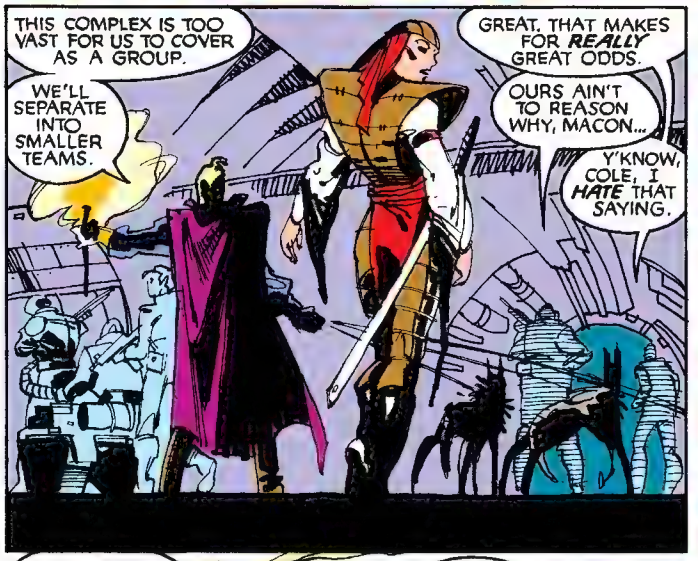

OVER YOUR DEAD BODY, GAIJIN!
SLAK!
AYAILEE!
DO NOT MISTAKE ME, WRETCH...
OWAW!
...FOR ONE OF YOUR TOYS!
THIS IS THE HONOR SWORD OF CLAN YASHIDA--
--AMONG THE FINEST OF ITS KIND EVER FORGED.
NONE MAY WIELD IT BUT THE LORD OF THE CLAN, OR ITS CHAMPION!
THEN, SWEETS, YOU GOT ABOUT AS MUCH RIGHT TO IT...
...AS ME... SO WHERE'S THE BEEF?
AT LEAST, I AM DAIMYO--
--NOBLE-BORN TO A HOUSE AS OLD AND RESPECTED AS THE YASHIDAS.
YOU ARE LESS THAN NOTHING.
AND WILL NOT TOUCH THIS BLADE AGAIN.
ON PERIL OF MY LIFE, RIGHT?
SURE, WHY NOT, WHAT THE HECK--
--WHO NEEDS A STUPID SWORD...
...WHEN THERE ARE LADIES TO CONQUER.


LATER...
WE GOT PROBLEMS.
SYSTEM'S DIFFERENT.
THERE'S A WHOLE NEW NETWORK, MR. PIERCE, WRITTEN IN A LANGUAGE I DON'T SPEAK.
BASIC CONFIGURATION'S EVOLVING, ALMOST AS IF THE BLAMED COMPUTER'S GROWING!
X-MEN MAY'VE MODIFIED THINGS-- THERE'S EVIDENCE OF THE REPAIR ROUTINES AT WORK, INDICATIONS OF MAJOR DAMAGE TO THE PRIMARY CPU-- BUT SOME OF THESE ELEMENTS, I SWEAR THEY LOOK LESS LIKE TECHNOLOGY THAN LIVING ORGANISMS.
THIS IS VERY WEIRD.
I DON'T LIKE IT.
YOU'RE SAYING, THEN...
...YOUR PRECIOUS COMPUTER CAN'T LOCATE OUR QUARRY.
SORRY.
NO MATTER.
PERHAPS IT'S FOR THE BEST...
...THIS BE DONE...
SNAP!
...THE OLD-FASHIONED WAY.
DINGOS?!
CYBORGS, BONEBREAKER, LIKE YOURSELF. HUNTER-KILLERS.
SUMMON THE OTHERS...
...AND WE'LL BEGIN.

HEY!
EXCUSE ME FOR LIVING, Y'KNOW, BUT WOULD SOMEBODY MIND CLUING ME IN ABOUT WHAT THE HECK IS GOING ON HERE?!!?
I MEAN, LIKE, F'R INSTANCE, A GIRL CLOSES HER EYES TO CATCH SOME LIKE REALLY SERIOUSLY NEEDED Z'S, I MEAN. I FIGURE I'M ENTITLED, IT AIN'T AS THOUGH I HAVEN'T LIKE BEEN WORKING MY BEE-HIND TO THE BONE TRYING TO KEEP A CERTAIN PERSON WHO OUT OF COURTESY SHALL REMAIN NAMELESS...
...LIKE BREATHING!
AN' ZAMMO, LIKE HERE WE ALL ARE IN THE WIDE OPEN SPACES...
...WHERE INCIDENTALLY THOSE TERMINATOROIDS CAN PROB'LY SPOT US FROM LIKE A ZILLION MILES AWAY...
...AN' YOU'RE PLAYING "MR. MEDIATOR" WITH GRAM'PA GEEK!
THAT'S RIGHT, DON'T SAY A WORD, THINK ABOUT YOURSELVES...
...NEVER ABOUT ME, oh NO, FORGET THAT I'M THE ONE...
...HAS TO GO SWIPE FOOD AN' WATER AN' MEDICINE AN' STUFF--
--NO MATTER HOW SCARED I FEEL.
I MEAN, I DON'T WANT TO UPSET YOU OR ANYTHING, PALS, BUT
THIS IS NOT FUN!
Y'KNOW?
MIGHT AS WELL BE TALKING TO MYSELF!

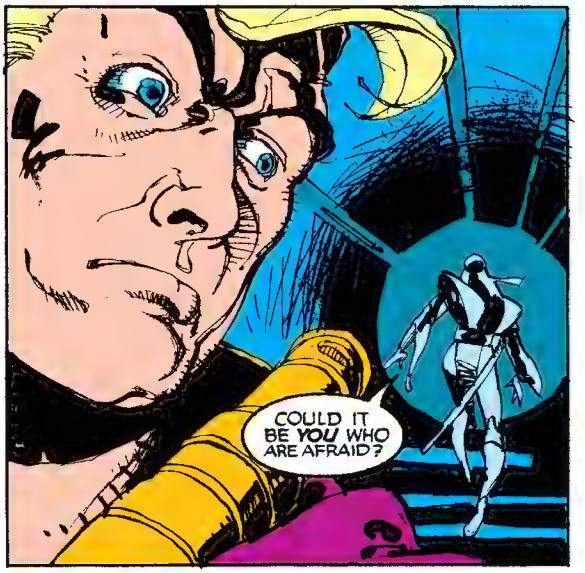
HEY-- WHERE'D THE SUN GO?
IS IT NIGHT ALREADY?
WOW!
NICE STARS.
DON'T SEE 'EM LIKE THIS BACK IN LA-LA LAND.
TOO MUCH SMOG--
YIKES!
FOOMP
Y'KNOW, LIGHTING A FIRE MAY NOT BE THE MOST BRILLIANT IDEA.
WHERE'S MR. GATEWAY?
HE'S OUTTA THE PICTURE.
IT'S JUST YOU AN' ME, KID.
THE HECK YOU SAY!
POW
I'M GOIN' NOWHERE, DOIN' NOTHIN'--
--ESPECIALLY WITH YOU--
--TILL I GET A REAL EXPLANATION!
PAM
ZAP
PAM
BAM
GLMPGH!
BZXL!
QUIET!
?!?
NOT A WORD, GIRL, NOT A SOUND--
--AN' ESPECIALLY NONE OF YOUR FLAMIN' FIREWORKS--
--DREAMTIME'S DONE, WE'RE BACK IN THE REAL WORLD...
...AN' PIERCE'S REAVERS ARE HUNTING!

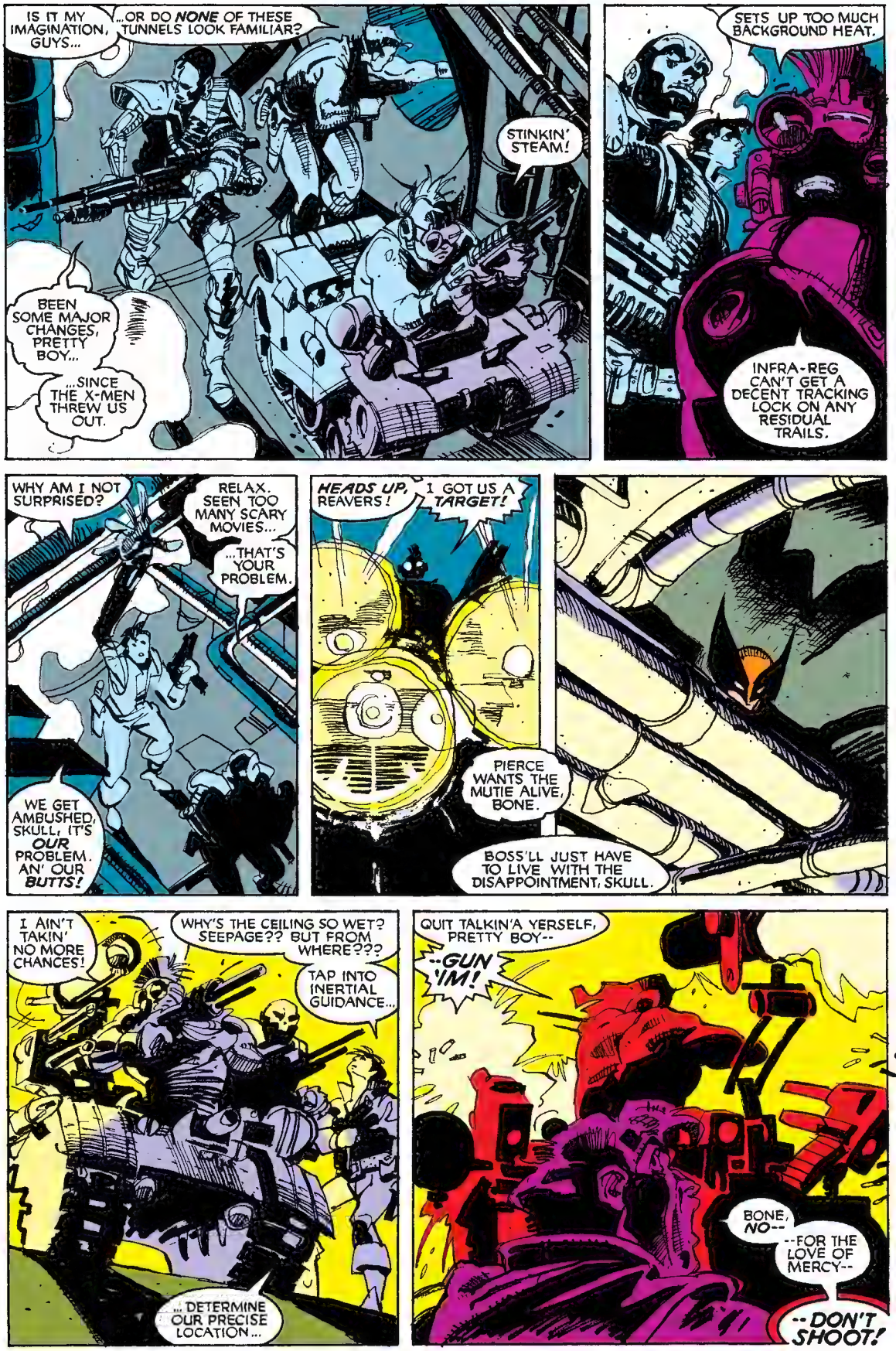
ALL OF YOU MAINTAIN DIRECT, REAL-TIME TELEMETRY LINKS WITH ME.
WHATEVER YOU DISCOVER, NO MATTER HOW TRIVIAL...
...I WANT TO KNOW ABOUT IT!

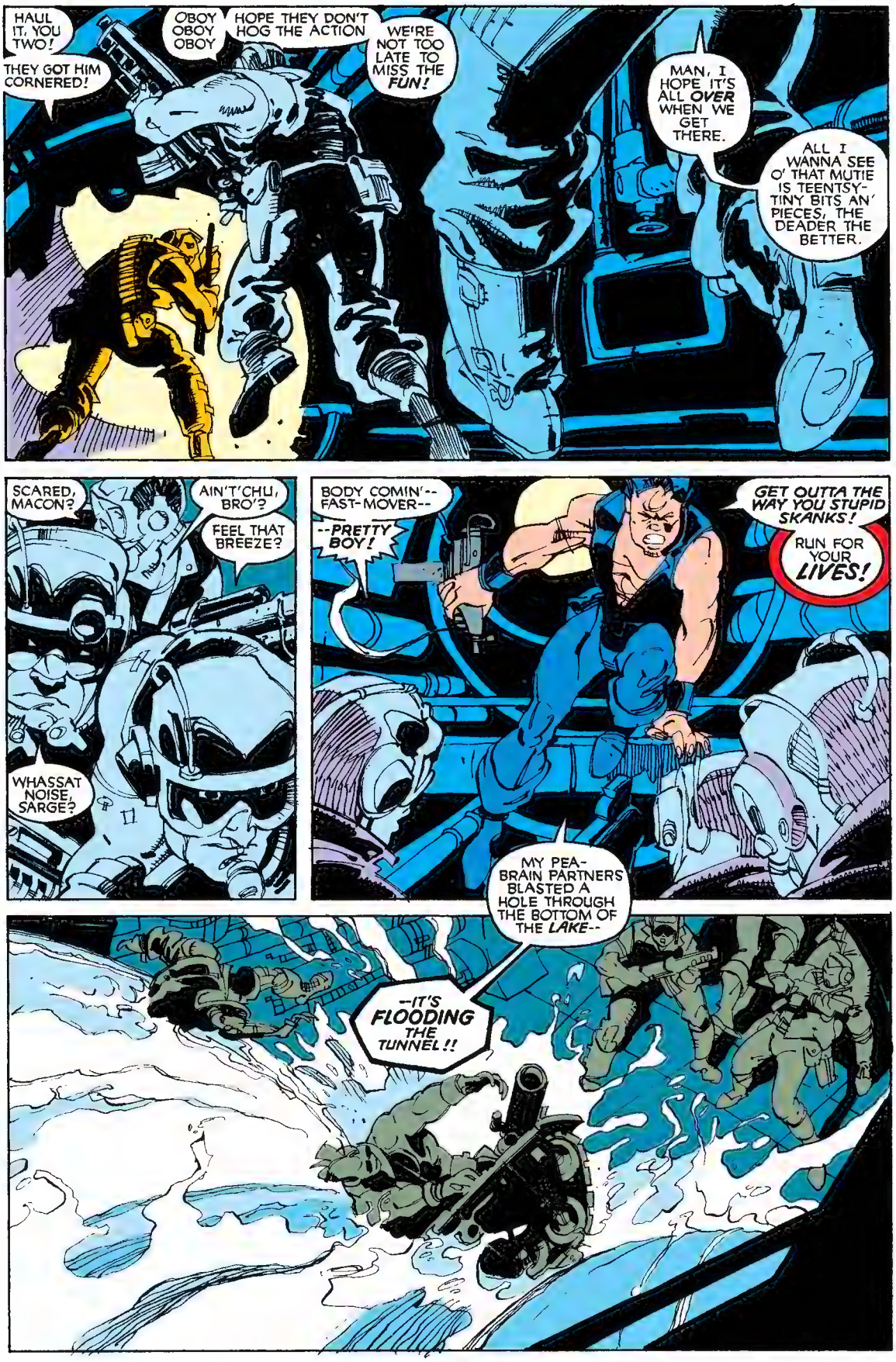

THIS COMPLEX IS TOO VAST FOR US TO COVER AS A GROUP.
WE'LL SEPARATE INTO SMALLER TEAMS.
GREAT. THAT MAKES FOR *REALLY* GREAT ODDS.
OURS AIN'T TO REASON WHY, MACON...
Y'KNOW, COLE, I *HATE* THAT SAYING.

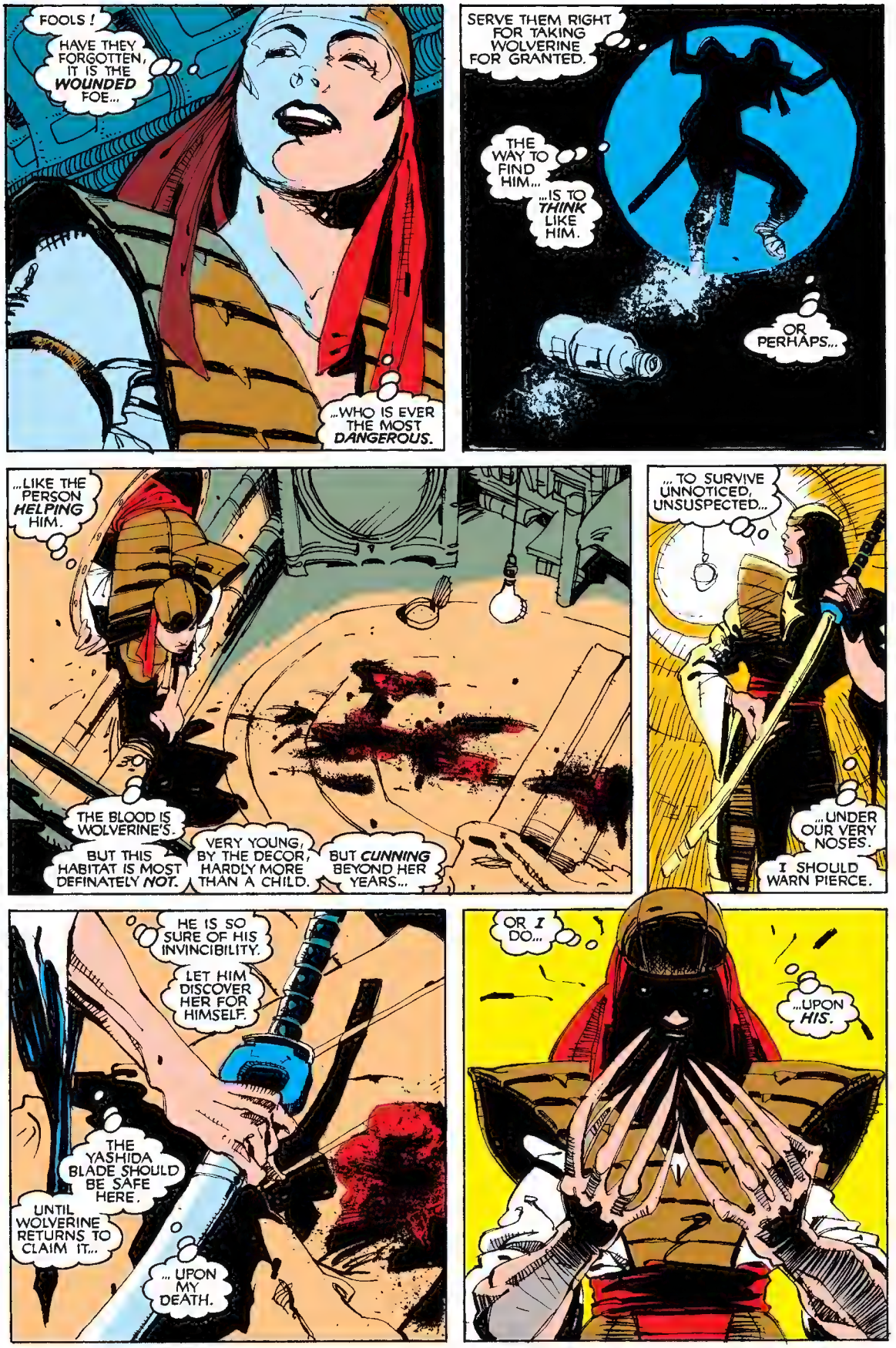
YOU'RE WELCOME TO STAY WITH ME, YURIKO.
I PREFER, LORD, TO GO MY OWN WAY.
THEN TAKE ONE OF MY CYBORG DINGOS.
FOR ASSISTANCE. AND, IF NECESSARY, PROTECTION.
THANK YOU, NO.

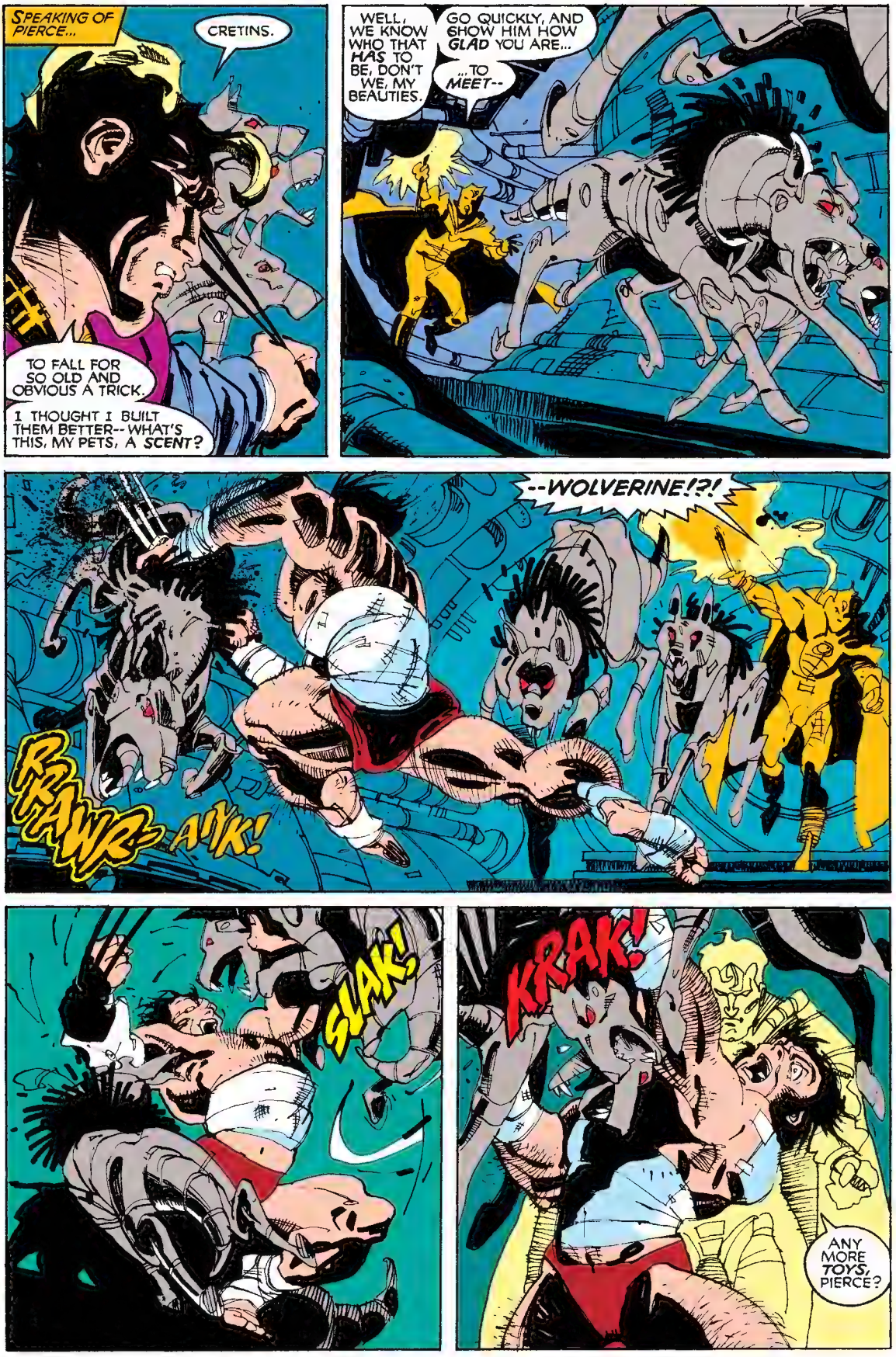
SO, LADY DEATHSTRIKE, YOU TRULY BELIEVE YOU'RE A MATCH FOR WOLVERINE?
WHY IS IT YOU ARE SO CONCERNED, LORD?


COULD IT BE *YOU* WHO ARE AFRAID?


IS IT MY IMAGINATION, GUYS...
...OR DO NONE OF THESE TUNNELS LOOK FAMILIAR?
STINKIN' STEAM!
BEEN SOME MAJOR CHANGES, PRETTY BOY...
...SINCE THE X-MEN THREW US OUT.
SETS UP TOO MUCH BACKGROUND HEAT.
INFRA-REG CAN'T GET A DECENT TRACKING LOCK ON ANY RESIDUAL TRAILS.
WHY AM I NOT SURPRISED?
RELAX. SEEN TOO MANY SCARY MOVIES...
...THAT'S YOUR PROBLEM.
WE GET AMBUSHED, SKULL, IT'S OUR PROBLEM. AN' OUR BUTTS!
HEADS UP, REAVERS!
I GOT US A TARGET!
PIERCE WANTS THE MUTIE ALIVE, BONE.
BOSS'LL JUST HAVE TO LIVE WITH THE DISAPPOINTMENT, SKULL.
I AIN'T TAKIN' NO MORE CHANCES!
WHY'S THE CEILING SO WET? SEEPAGE?? BUT FROM WHERE???
TAP INTO INERTIAL GUIDANCE...
...DETERMINE OUR PRECISE LOCATION...
QUIT TALKIN'A YERSELF, PRETTY BOY--
--GUN 'IM!
BONE, NO--
--FOR THE LOVE OF MERCY--
--DON'T SHOOT!


HAUL IT, YOU TWO!
THEY GOT HIM CORNERED!
OBOY OBOY OBOY
HOPE THEY DON'T HOG THE ACTION
WE'RE NOT TOO LATE TO MISS THE FUN!
MAN, I HOPE IT'S ALL OVER WHEN WE GET THERE.
ALL I WANNA SEE O' THAT MUTIE IS TEENTSY-TINY BITS AN' PIECES, THE DEADER THE BETTER.
SCARED, MACON?
AIN'T'CHU, BRO'?
FEEL THAT BREEZE?
WHASSAT NOISE, SARGE?
BODY COMIN'-- FAST-MOVER--
--PRETTY BOY!
GET OUTTA THE WAY YOU STUPID SKANKS!
RUN FOR YOUR LIVES!
MY PEA-BRAIN PARTNERS BLASTED A HOLE THROUGH THE BOTTOM OF THE LAKE--
--IT'S FLOODING THE TUNNEL!!


FOOLS!
HAVE THEY FORGOTTEN, IT IS THE WOUNDED FOE...
...WHO IS EVER THE MOST DANGEROUS.
SERVE THEM RIGHT FOR TAKING WOLVERINE FOR GRANTED.
THE WAY TO FIND HIM...
...IS TO THINK LIKE HIM.
OR PERHAPS...
...LIKE THE PERSON HELPING HIM.
THE BLOOD IS WOLVERINE'S.
BUT THIS HABITAT IS MOST DEFINATELY NOT.
VERY YOUNG, BY THE DECOR, HARDLY MORE THAN A CHILD.
BUT CUNNING BEYOND HER YEARS...
...TO SURVIVE UNNOTICED, UNSUSPECTED...
...UNDER OUR VERY NOSES.
I SHOULD WARN PIERCE.
HE IS SO SURE OF HIS INVINCIBILITY.
LET HIM DISCOVER HER FOR HIMSELF.
THE YASHIDA BLADE SHOULD BE SAFE HERE.
UNTIL WOLVERINE RETURNS TO CLAIM IT...
... UPON MY DEATH.
OR I DO...
...UPON HIS.


SPEAKING OF PIERCE...
CRETINS.
TO FALL FOR SO OLD AND OBVIOUS A TRICK.
I THOUGHT I BUILT THEM BETTER-- WHAT'S THIS, MY PETS, A SCENT?
WELL, WE KNOW WHO THAT HAS TO BE, DON'T WE, MY BEAUTIES.
GO QUICKLY, AND SHOW HIM HOW GLAD YOU ARE...
...TO MEET--
--WOLVERINE!?!
RRAWR-
AIYK!
SLAK!
KRAK!
ANY MORE TOYS, PIERCE?

OR THIS ONCE, YOU GONNA BE MAN ENOUGH TO TAKE ME ON YOURSELF?
C'MON, WHY HESITATE? I CAN BARELY STAND.
MAKES THIS A FAIR FIGHT.
NOBODY MOCKS ME, MUTIE--ESPECIALLY YOU!
THEN DO SOMETHIN' ABOUT IT, BUB.
'COURSE, I SHOULD WARN YOU...
... I AIN'T WORKIN' ALONE!
Whua--?!?
EAT PLASMA, DIRTBAG!
SPA KOW!
NICE SHOT, KIDDO.
HE'S BURIED UNDER THE WALL, D'YOU THINK I... KILLED HIM?
NICE IDEA. WOULDN'T COUNT ON IT.
YOU'RE BLEEDING AGAIN.
I'LL SURVIVE.
YEAH, RIGHT.
THOSE DOGS, THEY DIDN'T REACT TO ME.
COMPUTER'S LIMITED BY ITS PROGRAMMING. CYBORGS WERE KEYED TO MY SCENT. FAR AS THEY WERE CONCERNED, YOU DIDN'T EXIST.
WON'T MAKE THAT MISTAKE AGAIN.
STAY WITH ME, GIRL, YOU'RE MARKED.
CAN YOU MAKE IT ON YOUR OWN?
I CAN TRY.
WHAT THE HECK--
--I GOT NOTHIN' BETTER TO DO.
BUT YOU GOTTA DO SOMETHING ABOUT THIS MACHO ATTITUDE. I MEAN, IT IS LIKE SO LAME...!
NEXT: STORM WARNINGS!

MARVEL
THE UNCANNY
X-MEN
FEATURING··
MAGNETO'S
JOURNEY TO
MUIR
ISLAND!
··AND
BANSHEE'S
RESCUE OF
LORNA
DANE!
··THE
RETURN
OF
FORGE!
··THE
ESCAPE OF
JUBILEE
AND
WOLVERINE!
SILVESTRI
GREEN
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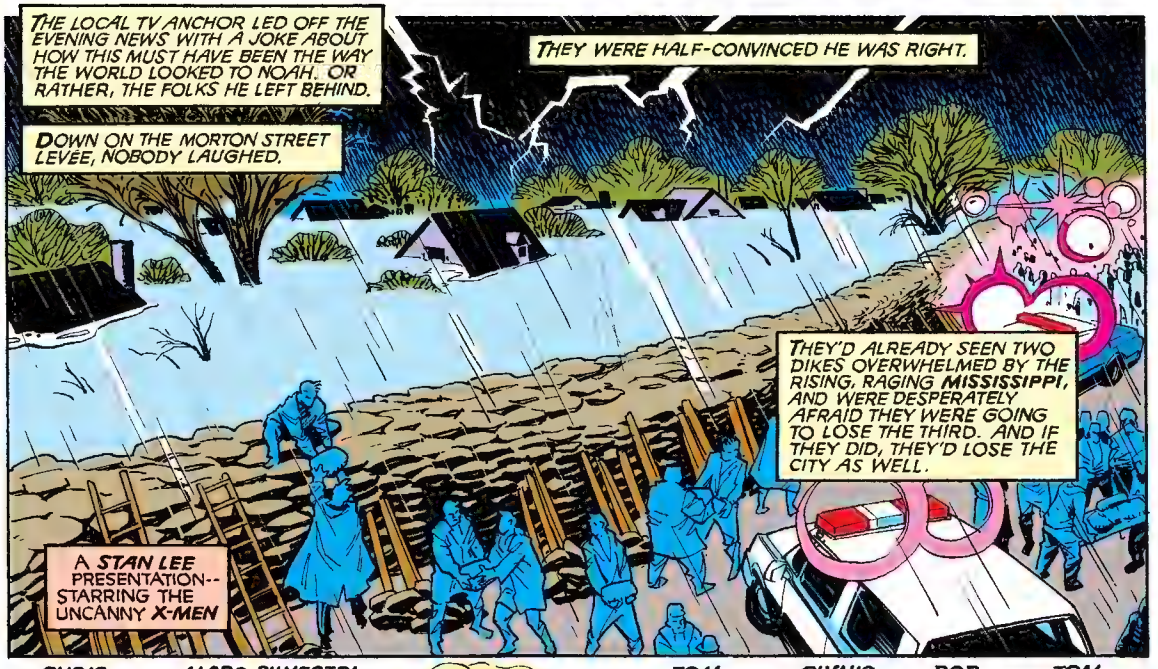

THE LOCAL TV ANCHOR LED OFF THE EVENING NEWS WITH A JOKE ABOUT HOW THIS MUST HAVE BEEN THE WAY THE WORLD LOOKED TO NOAH. OR RATHER, THE FOLKS HE LEFT BEHIND.
DOWN ON THE MORTON STREET LEVÉE, NOBODY LAUGHED.
THEY WERE HALF-CONVINCED HE WAS RIGHT.
THEY'D ALREADY SEEN TWO DIKES OVERWHELMED BY THE RISING, RAGING MISSISSIPPI, AND WERE DESPERATELY AFRAID THEY WERE GOING TO LOSE THE THIRD. AND IF THEY DID, THEY'D LOSE THE CITY AS WELL.
A STAN LEE PRESENTATION-- STARRING THE UNCANNY X-MEN

CHRIS CLAREMONT
WRITER

MARC SILVESTRI & STEVE LEIALOHA
ARTISTS

TOM ORZECHOWSKI
LETTERER

GLYNIS OLIVER
COLORIST

BOB HARRAS
EDITOR

TOM DeFALCO
BOSS

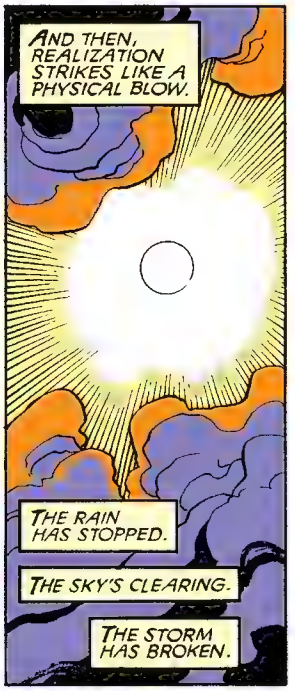
SKARA
BOOM

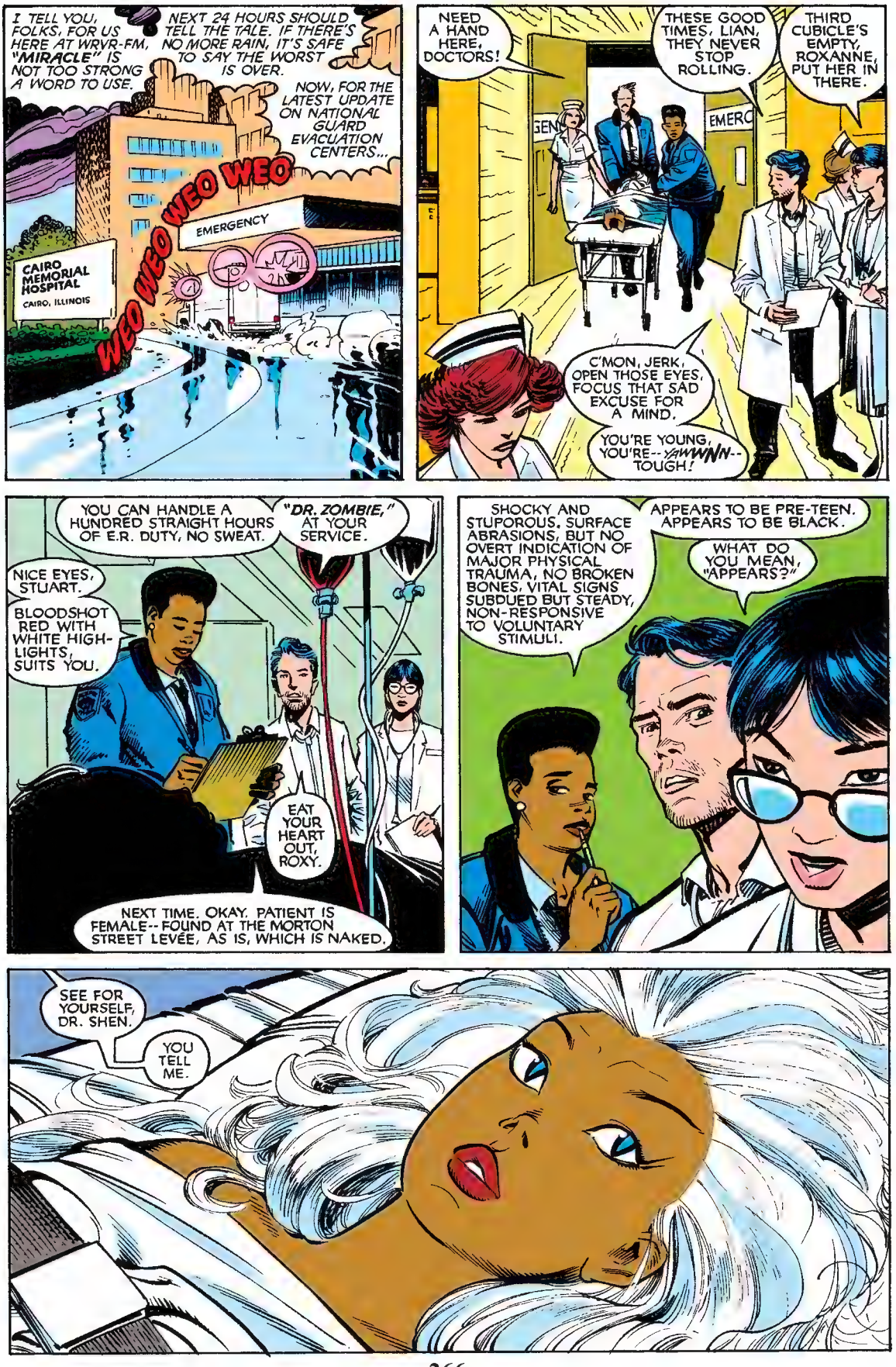
LORDY, WHAT A NOISE!
IT'S A GIRL!
WHERE'D SHE COME FROM?!
DOESN'T MATTER. WHAT'S IMPORTANT IS, SHE'S ALIVE AND NEEDS OUR HELP!
REST OF YOU, BACK TO WORK.
I'LL LOOK AFTER HER.

ROXANNE--
--YOU GOT A CUSTOMER!
MY LUCKY NIGHT.
AMBULANCE
EMERGENCY
911
LAY HER ON THE GURNEY, JACOB, WE'LL SEE WHAT SHE'S ABOUT.
HOW'S IT GOING?

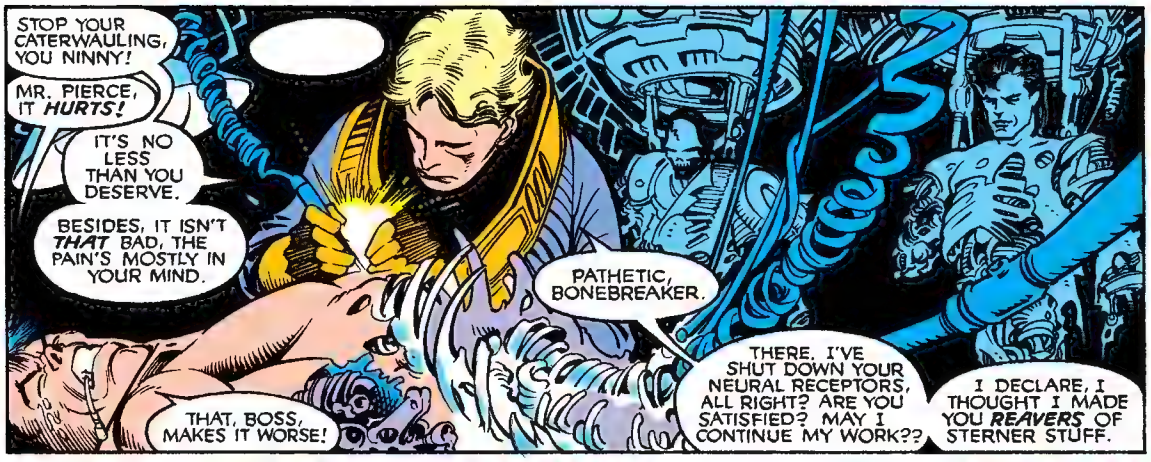
DON'T ASK.
BUT IT'S PROBABLY FOR THE BEST YOU BE AWAY FROM HERE. QUICK AS YOU CAN.
THAT BAD?
YOU GOT NO IDEA.
IT'S FLATLAND FOR MILES AROUND HERE, JAKE. THE LEVEE FAILS, WHAT HAPPENS TO YOU PEOPLE?

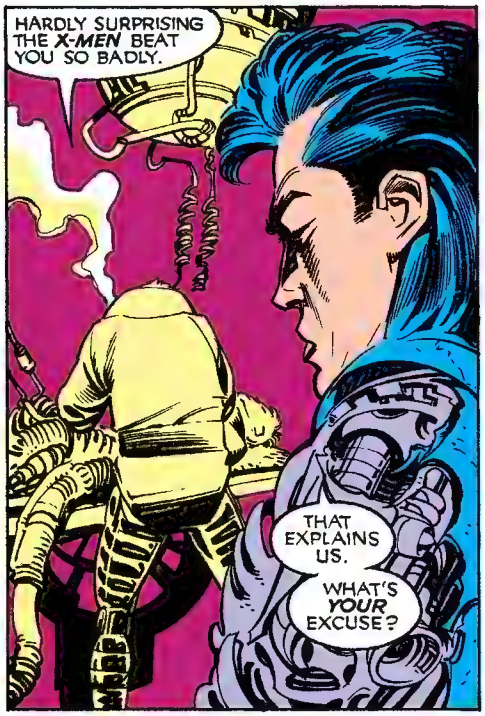
I GUESS WE LEARN HOW LONG, AND HOW HARD...
...WE CAN TREAD WATER.
JACOB REISZ IS TOO OLD FOR THIS.
TOO MANY ALL-NIGHT STAKEOUTS, AND THE JUNK FOOD THAT WENT WITH THEM, HAVE TAKEN THEIR TOLL.
EMERGENCY CALL 911
BUT HE IGNORES THE TWINGE INSIDE HIS CHEST AS HE TURNS BACK TO THE RIVER, SENSING SOMETHING WRONG, WONDERING WHAT IT IS.


AND THEN, REALIZATION STRIKES LIKE A PHYSICAL BLOW.
THE RAIN HAS STOPPED.
THE SKY'S CLEARING.
THE STORM HAS BROKEN.

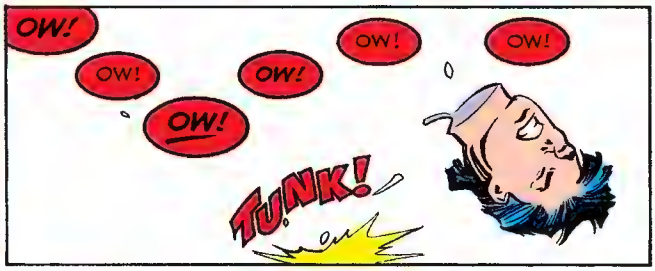

I TELL YOU, FOLKS, FOR US HERE AT WRVR-FM, "MIRACLE" IS NOT TOO STRONG A WORD TO USE.
NEXT 24 HOURS SHOULD TELL THE TALE. IF THERE'S NO MORE RAIN, IT'S SAFE TO SAY THE WORST IS OVER.
NOW, FOR THE LATEST UPDATE ON NATIONAL GUARD EVACUATION CENTERS...
WEO WEO WEO WEO
EMERGENCY
CAIRO MEMORIAL HOSPITAL
CAIRO, ILLINOIS
NEED A HAND HERE, DOCTORS!
THESE GOOD TIMES, LIAN, THEY NEVER STOP ROLLING.
THIRD CUBICLE'S EMPTY, ROXANNE, PUT HER IN THERE.
EMERC
C'MON, JERK, OPEN THOSE EYES, FOCUS THAT SAD EXCUSE FOR A MIND.
YOU'RE YOUNG, YOU'RE--YAWWNN--TOUGH!
YOU CAN HANDLE A HUNDRED STRAIGHT HOURS OF E.R. DUTY, NO SWEAT.
"DR. ZOMBIE," AT YOUR SERVICE.
NICE EYES, STUART.
BLOODSHOT RED WITH WHITE HIGH-LIGHTS, SUITS YOU.
EAT YOUR HEART OUT, ROXY.
NEXT TIME, OKAY. PATIENT IS FEMALE--FOUND AT THE MORTON STREET LEVÉE, AS IS, WHICH IS NAKED.
SHOCKY AND STUPOROUS. SURFACE ABRASIONS, BUT NO OVERT INDICATION OF MAJOR PHYSICAL TRAUMA, NO BROKEN BONES, VITAL SIGNS SUBDUED BUT STEADY, NON-RESPONSIVE TO VOLUNTARY STIMULI.
APPEARS TO BE PRE-TEEN. APPEARS TO BE BLACK.
WHAT DO YOU MEAN, "APPEARS?"
SEE FOR YOURSELF, DR. SHEN.
YOU TELL ME.

MEANWHILE...
...ON THE OTHER SIDE OF THE WORLD...
...(NOT TO MENTION THE OPPOSITE ENVIRONMENTAL EXTREME)...
...IN THE DESOLATE HEART OF AUSTRALIA'S GREAT CENTRAL DESERT, MORE COMMONLY--AND COLLOQUIALLY--REFERRED TO AS THE "OUTBACK."
WE'RE SOLDIERS, REESE--THE BEST OF THE BREED--NOT JANITORS.
WE SHOULDN'T BE DOIN' THIS.
WE DO, COLE, AS WE'RE TOLD.
MAN, IT AIN'T EVEN OUR FAULT!
WASN'T US WHO BLEW A HOLE THROUGH THE LAKE BOTTOM AN' FLOODED THESE STUPID TUNNELS, NOSIREE, HOWCUM WE HAVE TO MOP UP THE MESS?!
I MEAN, WHY NOT SIMPLY SEAL OFF THE SECTION?
THIS WHOLE UNDERGROUND COMPLEX IS SO BIG, YOU COULD LOSE A THOUSAND MEN IN IT, EASY!
PLENTY OF ROOM LEFT FOR THE EIGHT OF US.
GREAT IDEA, COLE.
ABSOLUTELY!
SEEMS TO ME YOU SHOULD BE TELLING IT...
...TO THE BOSS.
I'M SURE MR. PIERCE, HE'LL APPRECIATE YOUR INPUT.
ALMOST AS MUCH AS HE WILL...
... YOUR GOOFING OFF ON THE JOB.
HEY, REESE, NO NEED TO...
ON THE OTHER HAND, BRO'...
...WE COULD BE ALONGSIDE THE THREE ORIGINAL REAVERS...
...ON PIERCE'S WORK TABLE.
ARRRGH
SNAP


STOP YOUR CATERWAULING, YOU NINNY!
MR. PIERCE, IT HURTS!
IT'S NO LESS THAN YOU DESERVE.
BESIDES, IT ISN'T THAT BAD, THE PAIN'S MOSTLY IN YOUR MIND.
PATHETIC, BONEBREAKER.
THERE. I'VE SHUT DOWN YOUR NEURAL RECEPTORS, ALL RIGHT? ARE YOU SATISFIED? MAY I CONTINUE MY WORK??
I DECLARE, I THOUGHT I MADE YOU REAVERS OF STERNER STUFF.
THAT, BOSS, MAKES IT WORSE!


HARDLY SURPRISING THE X-MEN BEAT YOU SO BADLY.
THAT EXPLAINS US.
WHAT'S YOUR EXCUSE?

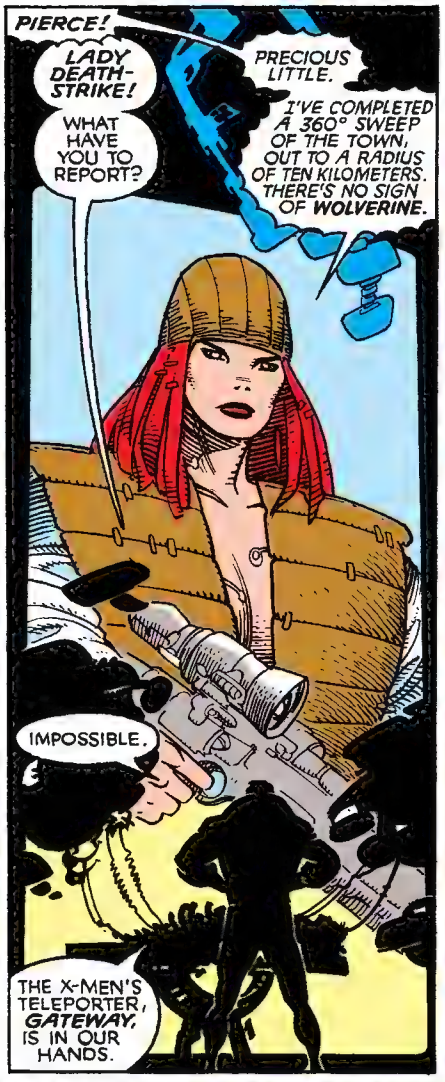
WOLVERINE WAXED YOUR TAIL JUST A- YAIEHLPK!
SLAKK!
ARE YOU SO TIRED OF LIFE, PRETTY BOY...

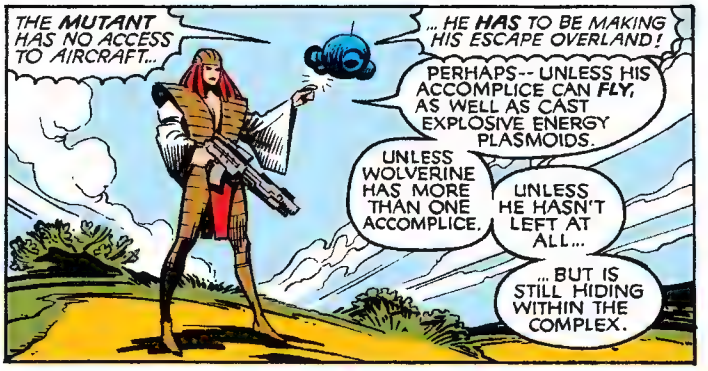

OW!
OW!
OW!
OW!
OW!
OW!
TUNK!

...THAT YOU APPEAR SO EAGER TO CAST IT AWAY?
HEY, BOSS, IT WAS A JOKE, CAN'T YOU TAKE A JOKE?!

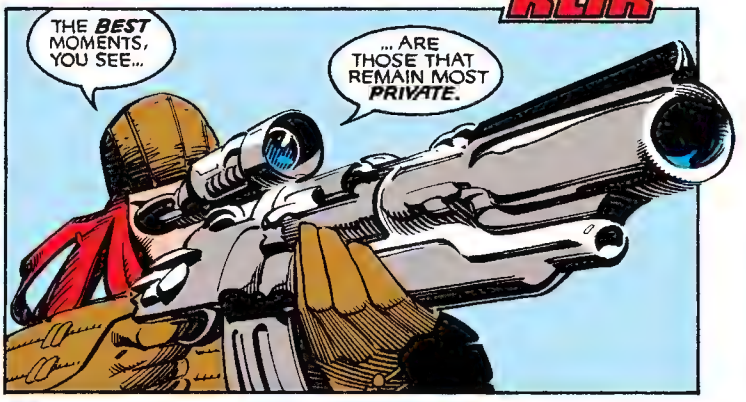
I LOVE JOKES, PRETTY BOY.
I ESPECIALLY LOVE GETTING MY OWN BACK...
...FAR, FAR BETTER THAN I WAS GIVEN.
ULP!

SO I DO HOPE, WHEN I'M DONE...
...YOU APPRECIATE MY SENSE OF HUMOR.
BETTER YOU THAN US, LOVER!
HAWHRRR!

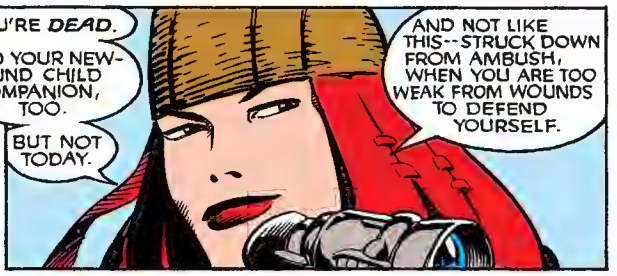

PIERCE!
LADY DEATH-STRIKE!
WHAT HAVE YOU TO REPORT?
PRECIOUS LITTLE.
I'VE COMPLETED A 360° SWEEP OF THE TOWN, OUT TO A RADIUS OF TEN KILOMETERS. THERE'S NO SIGN OF WOLVERINE.
IMPOSSIBLE.
THE X-MEN'S TELEPORTER, GATEWAY, IS IN OUR HANDS.

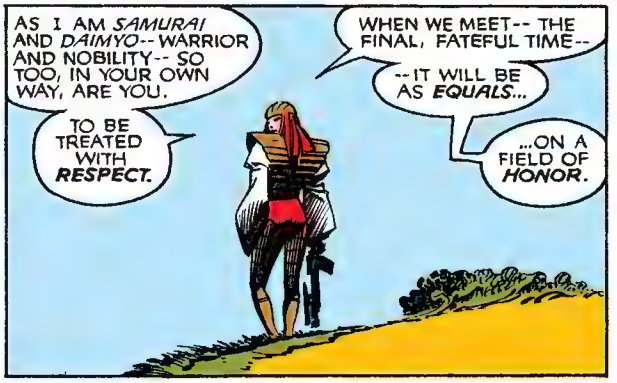

THE MUTANT HAS NO ACCESS TO AIRCRAFT...
... HE HAS TO BE MAKING HIS ESCAPE OVERLAND!
PERHAPS-- UNLESS HIS ACCOMPLICE CAN FLY, AS WELL AS CAST EXPLOSIVE ENERGY PLASMOIDS.
UNLESS WOLVERINE HAS MORE THAN ONE ACCOMPLICE.
UNLESS HE HASN'T LEFT AT ALL...
... BUT IS STILL HIDING WITHIN THE COMPLEX.

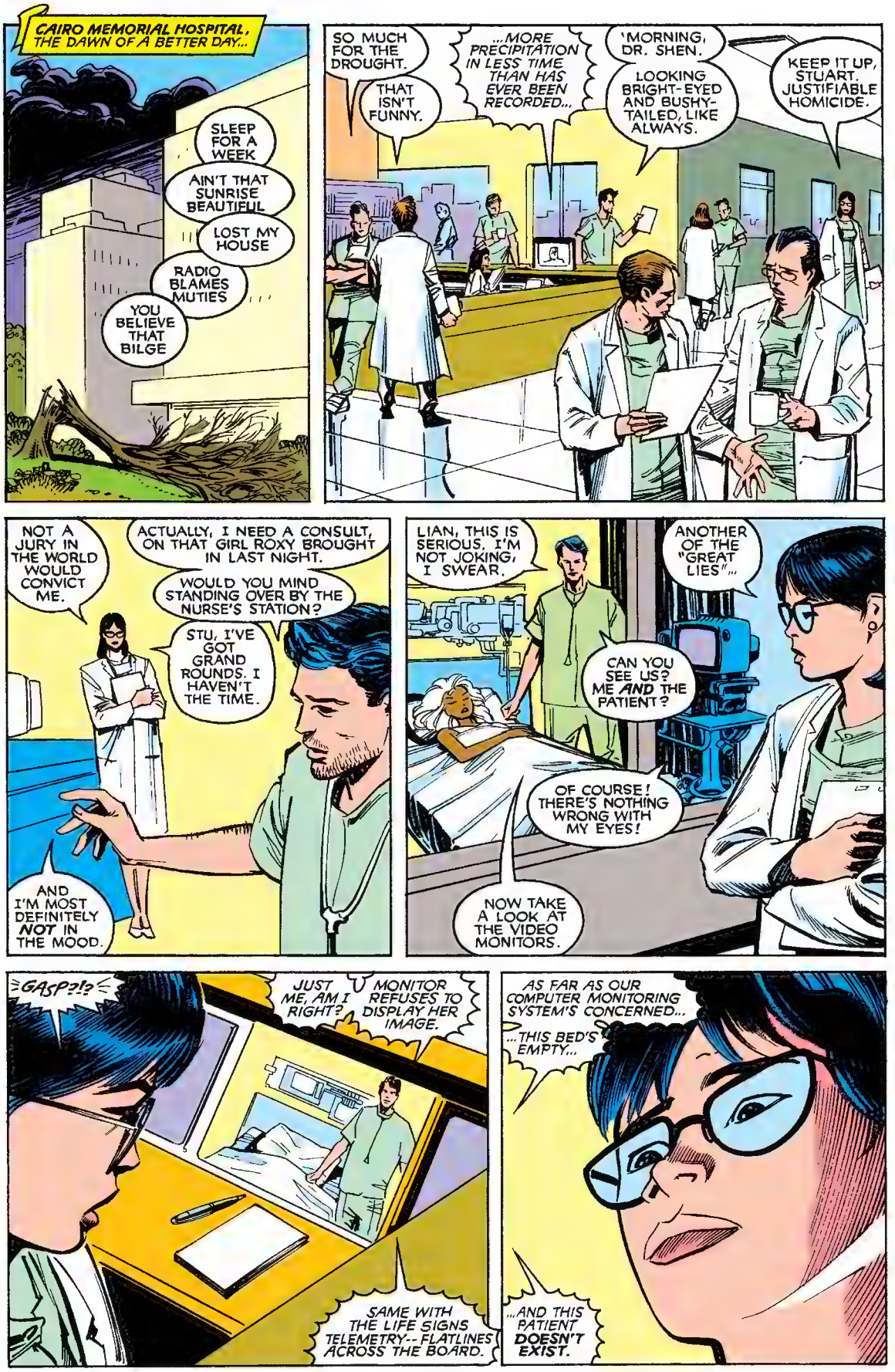
TOO MANY POSSIBILITIES, PIERCE.
WE CANNOT COVER THEM ALL.
MAKE ONE MORE CIRCUIT, THEN RETURN TO BASE.
AS YOU COMMAND, LORD.
SPYEYE--
SPYEYE ACKNOWLEDGE-- breep-- AWAITING INSTRUCTIONS.
--SHUT DOWN ALL SYSTEMS. TOTAL DEACTIVATION MODE.
KLIK

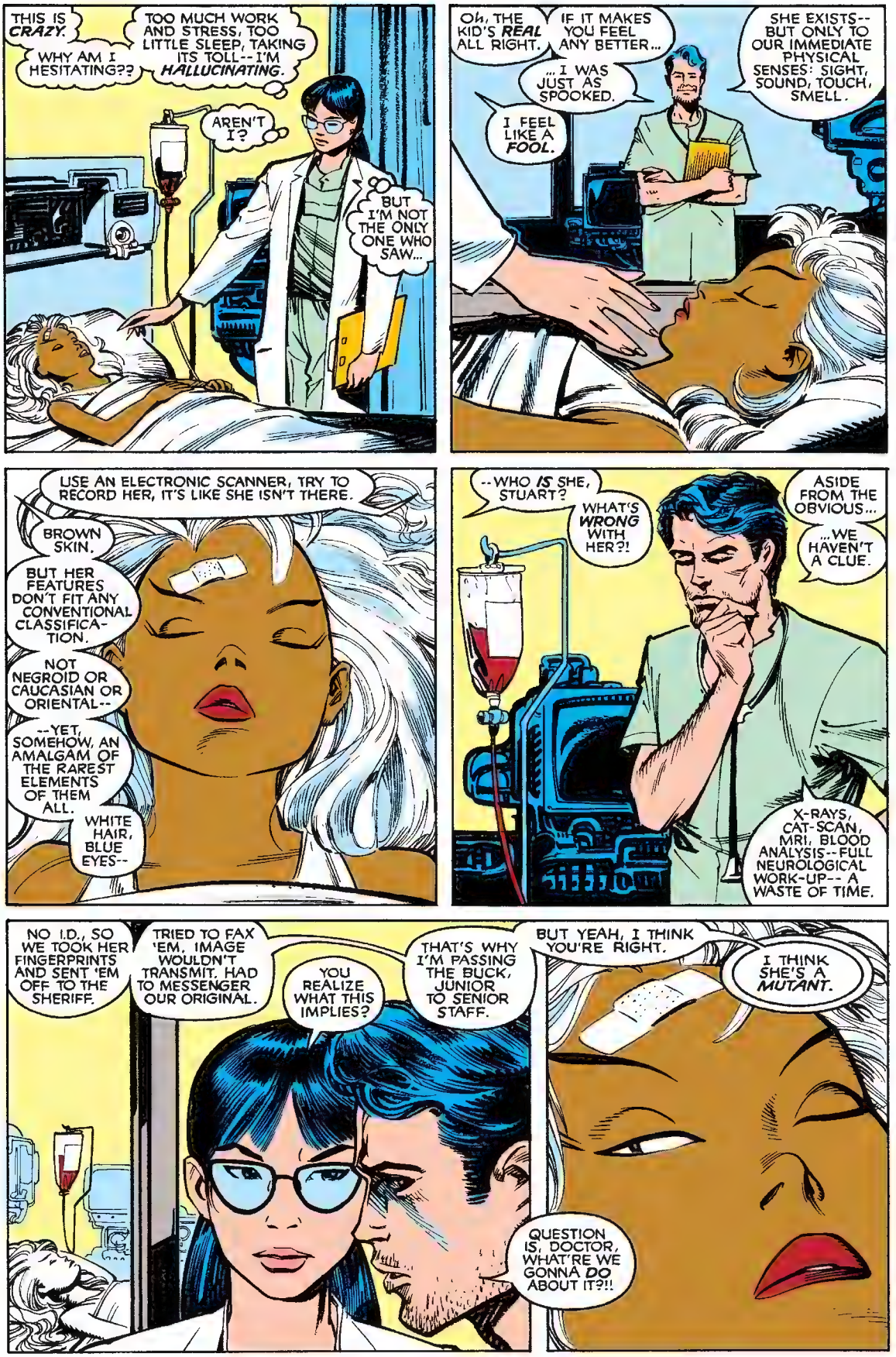

THE BEST MOMENTS, YOU SEE...
... ARE THOSE THAT REMAIN MOST PRIVATE.

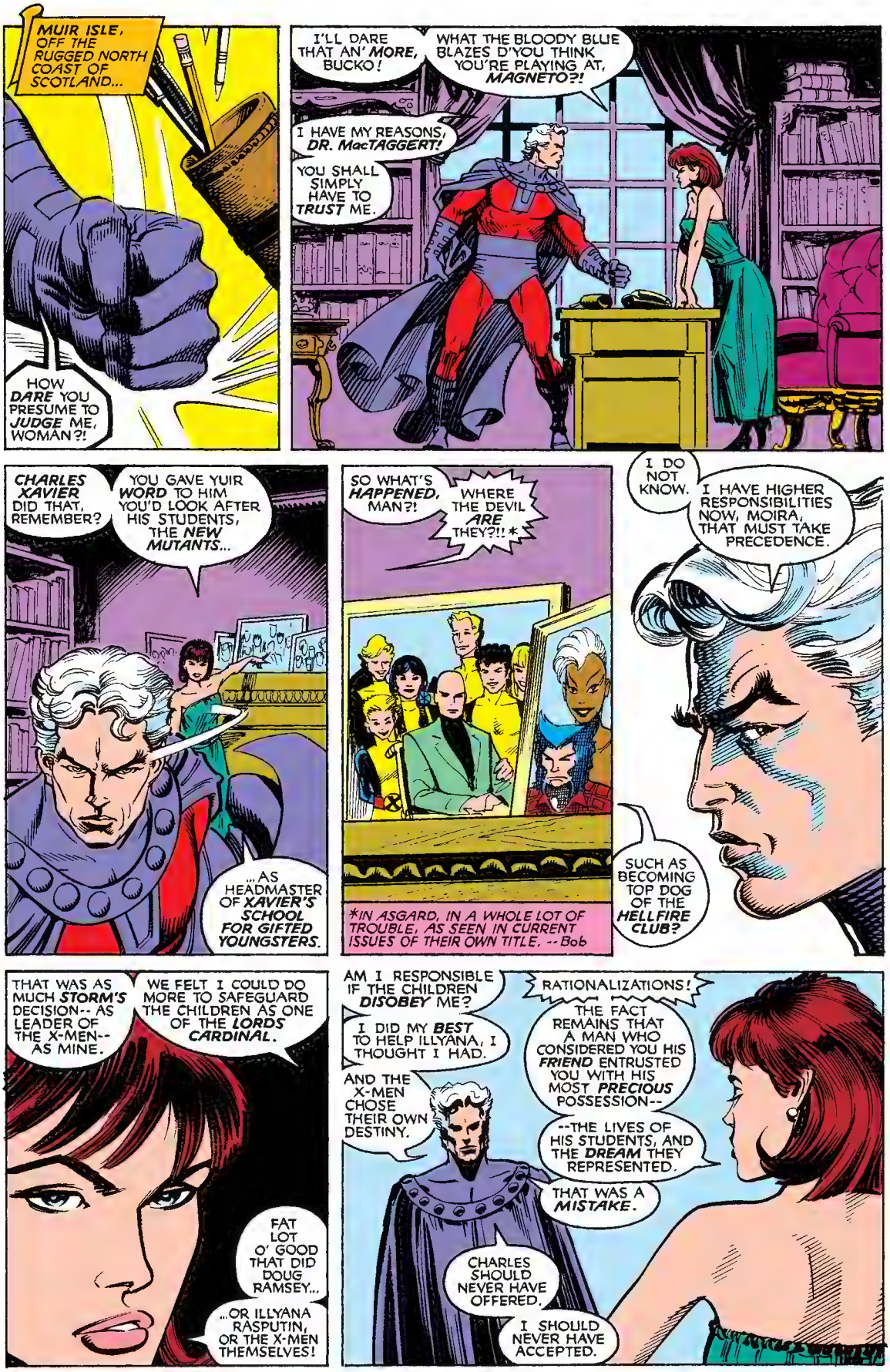
BANG, WOLVERINE.
MAG: 200x
RANGE: 6.5 km
WIND NW 29?° 7 km/hr.
TARGET: LOCKED
N
W
E
S
ROUNDS: 6
TYPE: ARMOR-PIERCING EXPLOSIVE


YOU'RE DEAD.
AND YOUR NEW-FOUND CHILD COMPANION, TOO.
BUT NOT TODAY.
AND NOT LIKE THIS--STRUCK DOWN FROM AMBUSH, WHEN YOU ARE TOO WEAK FROM WOUNDS TO DEFEND YOURSELF.


AS I AM SAMURAI AND DAIMYO-- WARRIOR AND NOBILITY-- SO TOO, IN YOUR OWN WAY, ARE YOU.
TO BE TREATED WITH RESPECT.
WHEN WE MEET-- THE FINAL, FATEFUL TIME--
--IT WILL BE AS EQUALS...
...ON A FIELD OF HONOR.

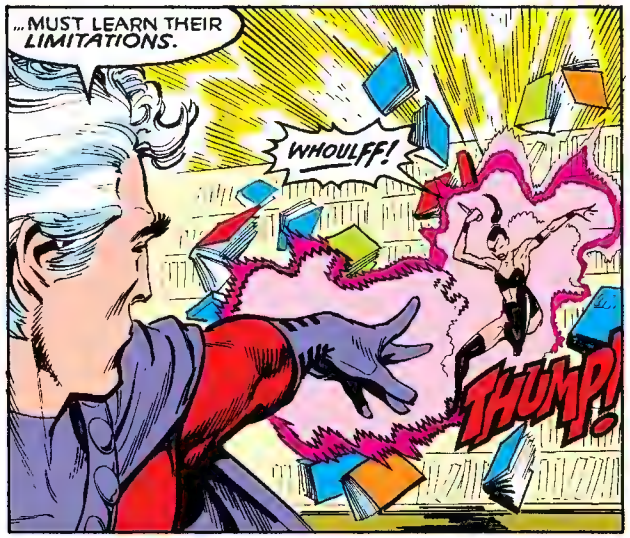

CAIRO MEMORIAL HOSPITAL, THE DAWN OF A BETTER DAY...
SLEEP FOR A WEEK
AIN'T THAT SUNRISE BEAUTIFUL
LOST MY HOUSE
RADIO BLAMES MUTIES
YOU BELIEVE THAT BILGE
SO MUCH FOR THE DROUGHT.
THAT ISN'T FUNNY.
...MORE PRECIPITATION IN LESS TIME THAN HAS EVER BEEN RECORDED...
'MORNING, DR. SHEN.
LOOKING BRIGHT-EYED AND BUSHY-TAILED, LIKE ALWAYS.
KEEP IT UP, STUART. JUSTIFIABLE HOMICIDE.
NOT A JURY IN THE WORLD WOULD CONVICT ME.
ACTUALLY, I NEED A CONSULT, ON THAT GIRL ROXY BROUGHT IN LAST NIGHT.
WOULD YOU MIND STANDING OVER BY THE NURSE'S STATION?
STU, I'VE GOT GRAND ROUNDS. I HAVEN'T THE TIME.
AND I'M MOST DEFINITELY NOT IN THE MOOD.
LIAN, THIS IS SERIOUS. I'M NOT JOKING, I SWEAR.
ANOTHER OF THE "GREAT LIES"...
CAN YOU SEE US? ME AND THE PATIENT?
OF COURSE! THERE'S NOTHING WRONG WITH MY EYES!
NOW TAKE A LOOK AT THE VIDEO MONITORS.
GASP?!?
JUST ME, AM I RIGHT?
MONITOR REFUSES TO DISPLAY HER IMAGE.
SAME WITH THE LIFE SIGNS TELEMETRY-- FLATLINES ACROSS THE BOARD.
AS FAR AS OUR COMPUTER MONITORING SYSTEM'S CONCERNED...
...THIS BED'S EMPTY...
...AND THIS PATIENT DOESN'T EXIST.


THIS IS CRAZY.
WHY AM I HESITATING??
TOO MUCH WORK AND STRESS, TOO LITTLE SLEEP, TAKING ITS TOLL--I'M HALLUCINATING.
AREN'T I?
BUT I'M NOT THE ONLY ONE WHO SAW...
OH, THE KID'S REAL ALL RIGHT.
IF IT MAKES YOU FEEL ANY BETTER...
...I WAS JUST AS SPOOKED.
I FEEL LIKE A FOOL.
SHE EXISTS--BUT ONLY TO OUR IMMEDIATE PHYSICAL SENSES: SIGHT, SOUND, TOUCH, SMELL.
USE AN ELECTRONIC SCANNER, TRY TO RECORD HER, IT'S LIKE SHE ISN'T THERE.
BROWN SKIN.
BUT HER FEATURES DON'T FIT ANY CONVENTIONAL CLASSIFICATION.
NOT NEGROID OR CAUCASIAN OR ORIENTAL--
--YET, SOMEHOW, AN AMALGAM OF THE RAREST ELEMENTS OF THEM ALL.
WHITE HAIR, BLUE EYES--
--WHO IS SHE, STUART?
WHAT'S WRONG WITH HER?!
ASIDE FROM THE OBVIOUS...
...WE HAVEN'T A CLUE.
X-RAYS, CAT-SCAN, MRI, BLOOD ANALYSIS--FULL NEUROLOGICAL WORK-UP-- A WASTE OF TIME.
NO I.D., SO WE TOOK HER FINGERPRINTS AND SENT 'EM OFF TO THE SHERIFF.
TRIED TO FAX 'EM, IMAGE WOULDN'T TRANSMIT. HAD TO MESSENGER OUR ORIGINAL.
YOU REALIZE WHAT THIS IMPLIES?
THAT'S WHY I'M PASSING THE BUCK, JUNIOR TO SENIOR STAFF.
BUT YEAH, I THINK YOU'RE RIGHT.
I THINK SHE'S A MUTANT.
QUESTION IS, DOCTOR, WHAT'RE WE GONNA DO ABOUT IT?!!


MUIR ISLE, OFF THE RUGGED NORTH COAST OF SCOTLAND...
HOW DARE YOU PRESUME TO JUDGE ME, WOMAN?!
I'LL DARE THAT AN' MORE, BUCKO!
WHAT THE BLOODY BLUE BLAZES D'YOU THINK YOU'RE PLAYING AT, MAGNETO?!
I HAVE MY REASONS, DR. MacTAGGERT!
YOU SHALL SIMPLY HAVE TO TRUST ME.
CHARLES XAVIER DID THAT, REMEMBER?
YOU GAVE YUIR WORD TO HIM YOU'D LOOK AFTER HIS STUDENTS, THE NEW MUTANTS...
...AS HEADMASTER OF XAVIER'S SCHOOL FOR GIFTED YOUNGSTERS.
SO WHAT'S HAPPENED, MAN?!
WHERE THE DEVIL ARE THEY?!! *
*IN ASGARD, IN A WHOLE LOT OF TROUBLE, AS SEEN IN CURRENT ISSUES OF THEIR OWN TITLE. -- Bob
I DO NOT KNOW.
I HAVE HIGHER RESPONSIBILITIES NOW, MOIRA, THAT MUST TAKE PRECEDENCE.
SUCH AS BECOMING TOP DOG OF THE HELLFIRE CLUB?
THAT WAS AS MUCH STORM'S DECISION-- AS LEADER OF THE X-MEN-- AS MINE.
WE FELT I COULD DO MORE TO SAFEGUARD THE CHILDREN AS ONE OF THE LORDS CARDINAL.
FAT LOT O' GOOD THAT DID DOUG RAMSEY...
...OR ILLYANA RASPUTIN, OR THE X-MEN THEMSELVES!
AM I RESPONSIBLE IF THE CHILDREN DISOBEY ME?
I DID MY BEST TO HELP ILLYANA, I THOUGHT I HAD.
AND THE X-MEN CHOSE THEIR OWN DESTINY.
RATIONALIZATIONS!
THE FACT REMAINS THAT A MAN WHO CONSIDERED YOU HIS FRIEND ENTRUSTED YOU WITH HIS MOST PRECIOUS POSSESSION--
--THE LIVES OF HIS STUDENTS, AND THE DREAM THEY REPRESENTED.
THAT WAS A MISTAKE.
CHARLES SHOULD NEVER HAVE OFFERED.
I SHOULD NEVER HAVE ACCEPTED.

WHAT, YOU FIGURE YOU'LL DUMP THE BAIRNS-- LIKE SO MUCH EXCESS BAGGAGE-- WITH A FEW COLD WORDS, AN' GO YUIR MERRY WAY AN' THERE'S THE END TO IT?!
WHAT COMES NEXT, O MASTER OF MAGNETISM--
--ANOTHER BROTHERHOOD OF EVIL MUTANTS?!!
RESTRAIN YOURSELF, WOMAN!
THE DEVIL I WILL!

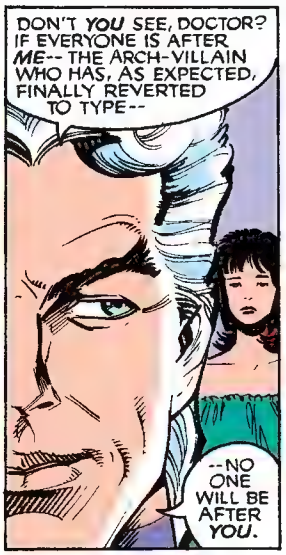
LET HER GO, MAGNETO!
SKRAM!
--AS WARRIOR AND DOCTOR MacTAGGERT'S BODYGUARD...
...YOU MAY HAVE NO PEER--
CALLISTO--
--BUT EVEN THE BEST...

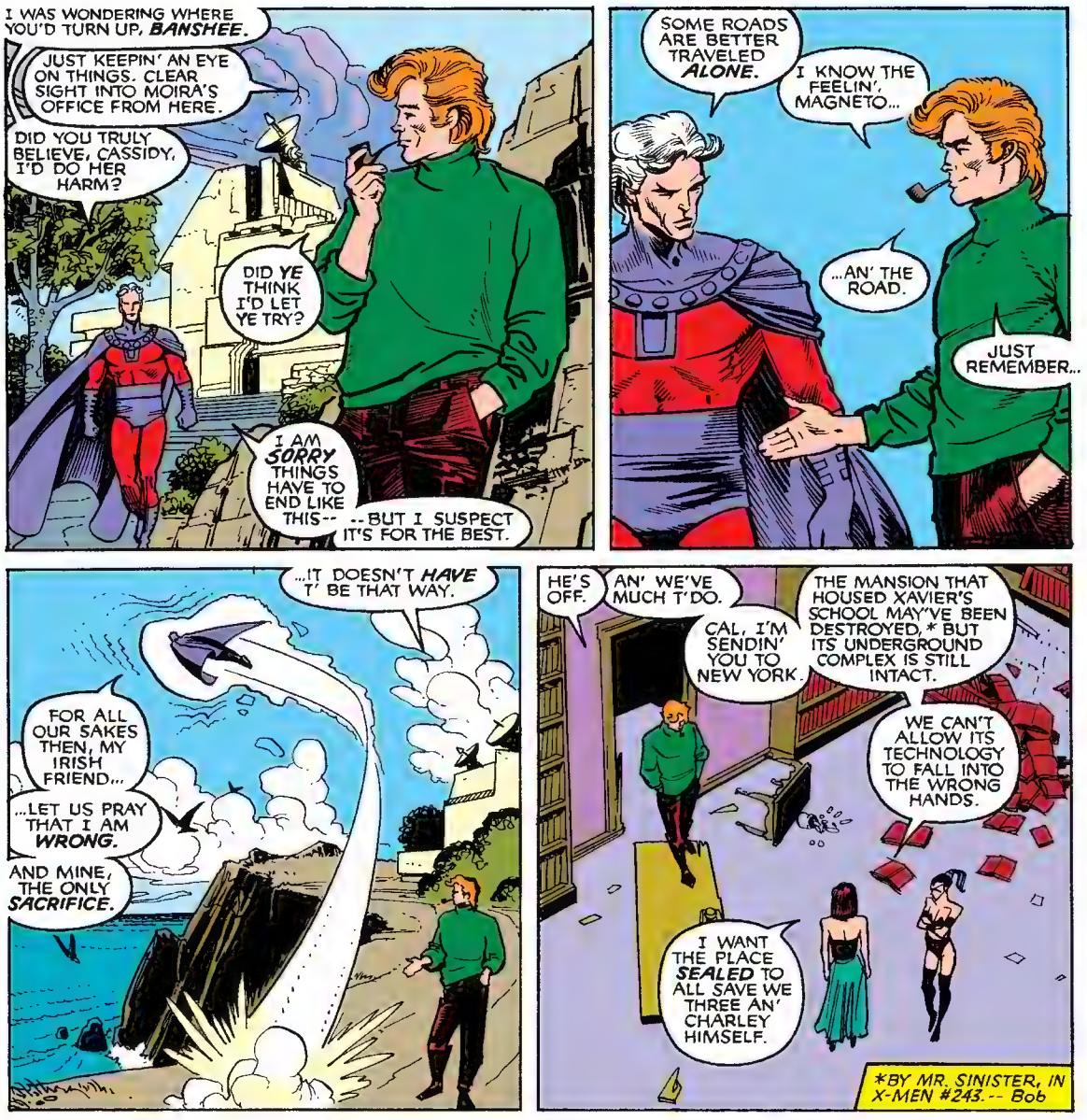

...MUST LEARN THEIR LIMITATIONS.
WHOULFF!
THUMP!

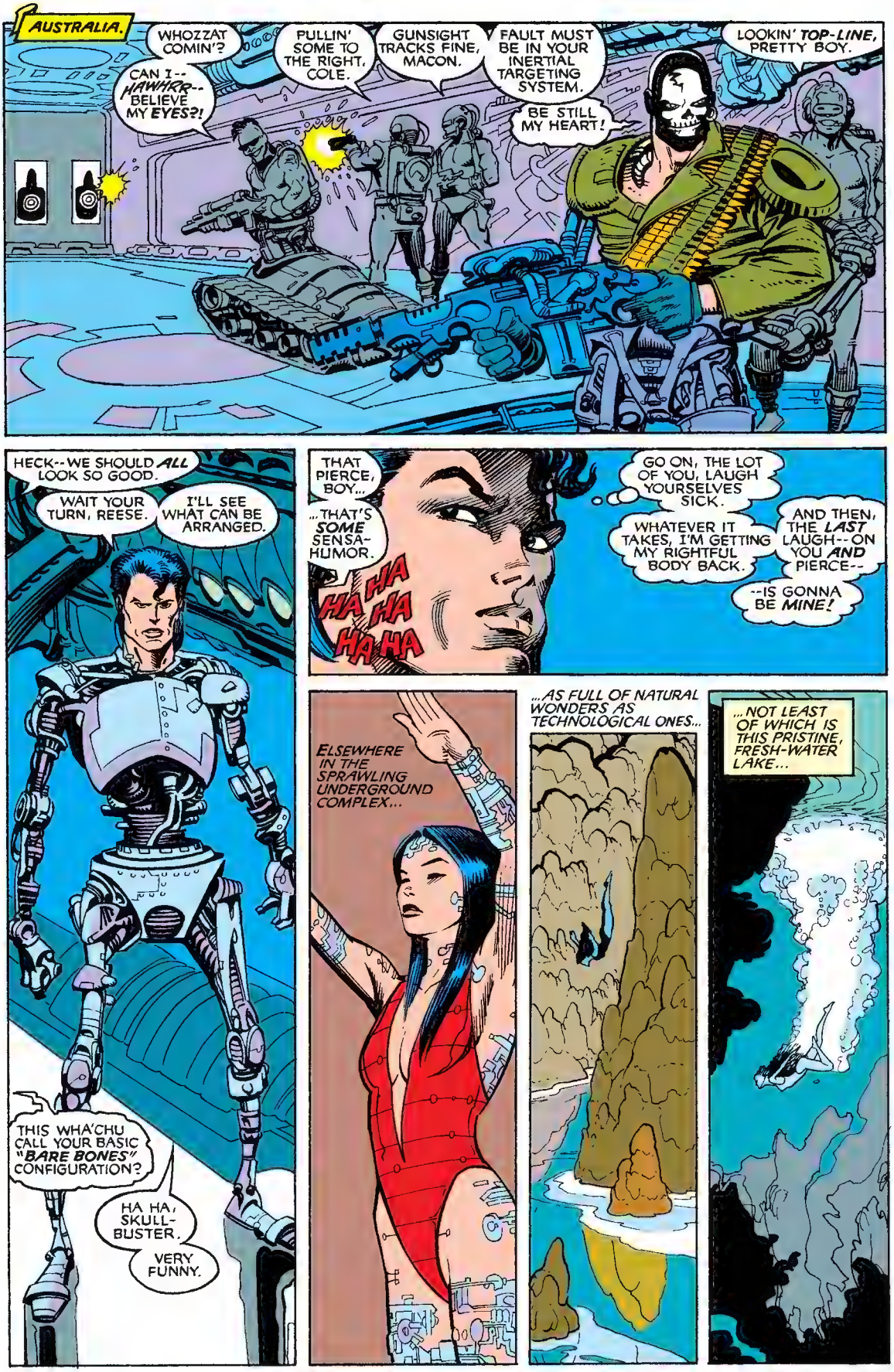
THERE IS A WAR COMING, MOIRA. AND YOU ARE A FOOL IF YOU DO NOT SEE IT.
WE MUTANTS CANNOT BE WISHED AWAY, WE ARE HERE ON THIS EARTH, MORE AND MORE BORN EVERY DAY.
THERE ARE THOSE WHO WILL ACCEPT US, AND THOSE WHO FEAR US AND SEEK OUR DESTRUCTION.
AND, WORST OF ALL, THOSE LIKE THE GENOSHANS...
...WHO DESIRE TO EXPLOIT US FOR THEIR OWN POWER AND PROFIT.

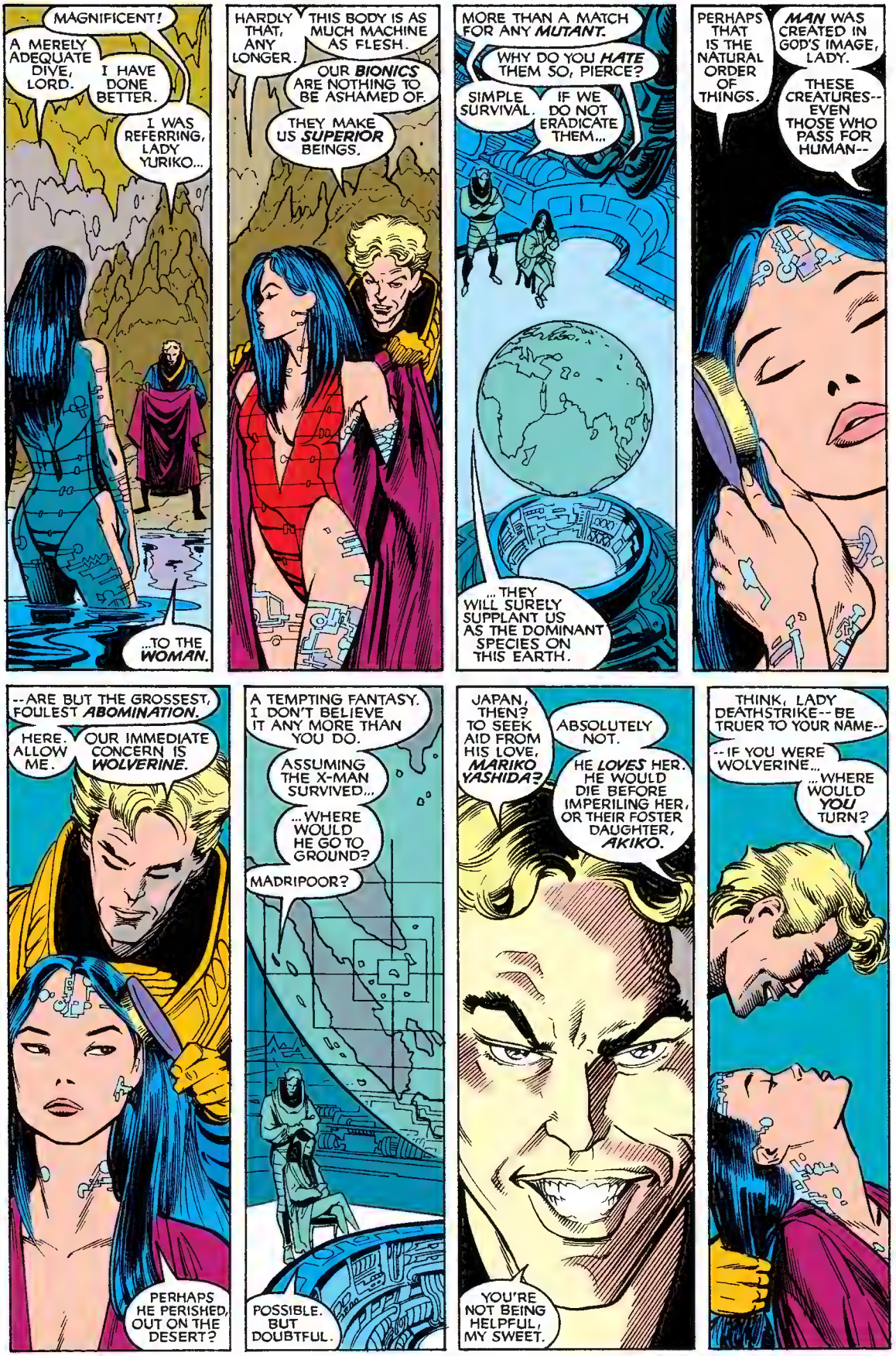
WE MUST BE STRONG ENOUGH-- AS A PEOPLE-- TO SURVIVE WITHOUT THE SUFFERANCE OF THE ONE OR THE AGGRESSIONS OF THE OTHERS.
I MEAN TO ENSURE THAT.
I MUST-- BECAUSE THERE IS NO ONE ELSE.

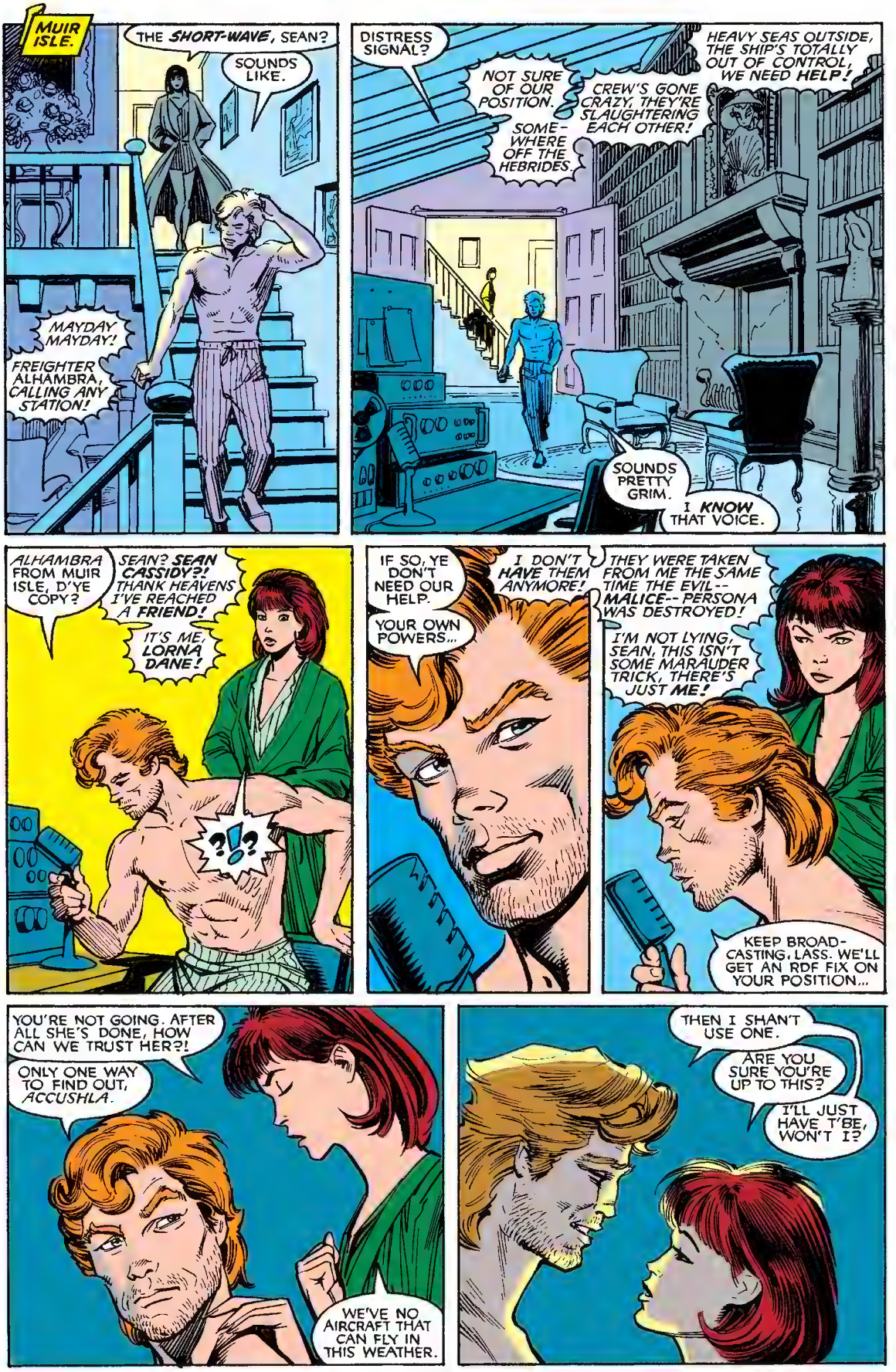
THE X-MEN ARE DEAD, X-FACTOR HAS VANISHED. AND THE NEW MUTANTS ARE BUT CHILDREN.
TOO MUCH IS AT STAKE, MOIRA. I CANNOT FAIL.
DON'T YOU SEE, MAGNETO?
IF YOU LOSE YUIR SELF IN THE PROCESS, YOU ALREADY HAVE!

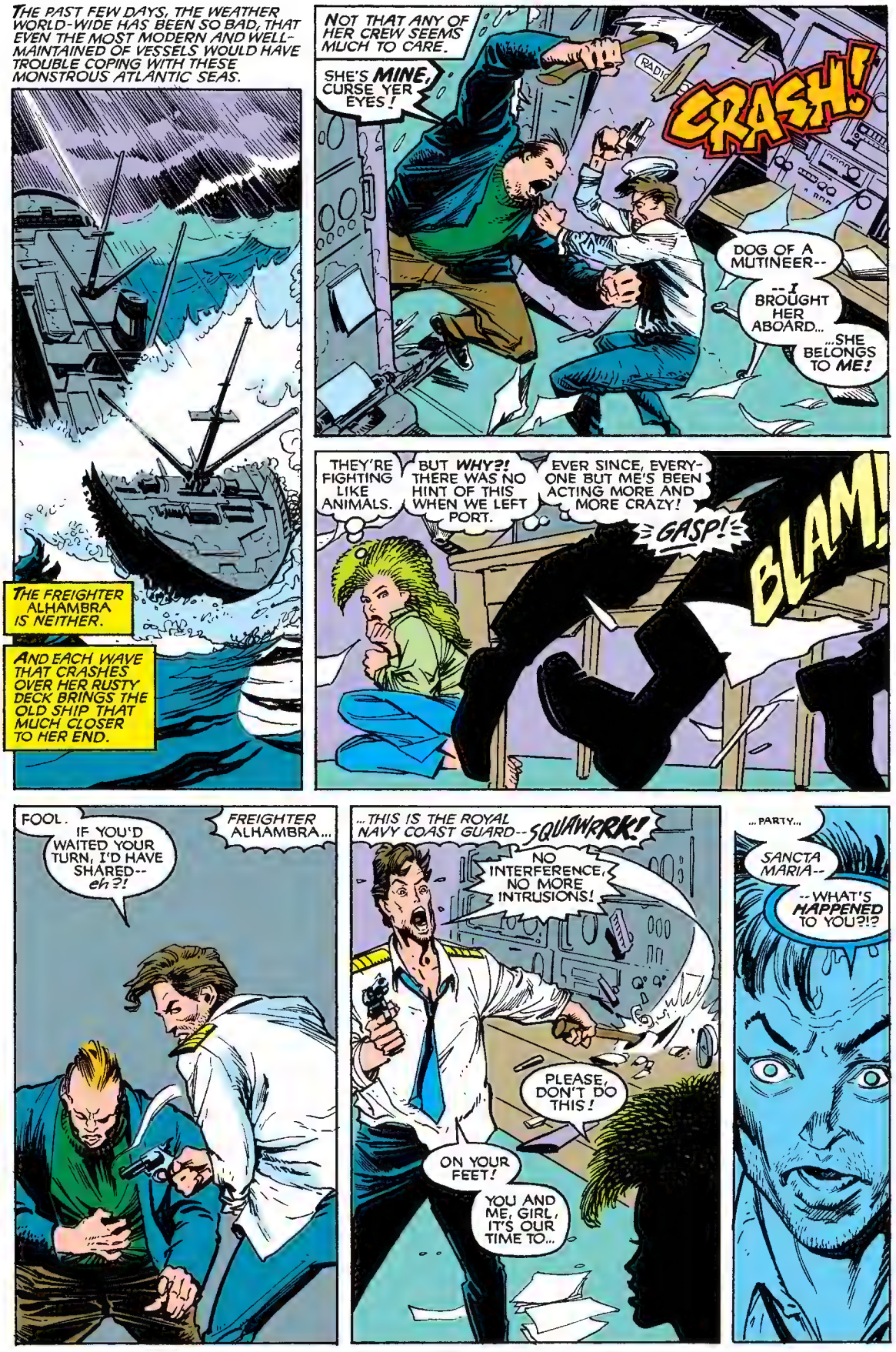

DON'T YOU SEE, DOCTOR? IF EVERYONE IS AFTER ME-- THE ARCH-VILLAIN WHO HAS, AS EXPECTED, FINALLY REVERTED TO TYPE--
--NO ONE WILL BE AFTER YOU.


I WAS WONDERING WHERE YOU'D TURN UP, BANSHEE.
JUST KEEPIN' AN EYE ON THINGS. CLEAR SIGHT INTO MOIRA'S OFFICE FROM HERE.
DID YOU TRULY BELIEVE, CASSIDY, I'D DO HER HARM?
DID YE THINK I'D LET YE TRY?
I AM SORRY THINGS HAVE TO END LIKE THIS--
--BUT I SUSPECT IT'S FOR THE BEST.
SOME ROADS ARE BETTER TRAVELED ALONE.
I KNOW THE FEELIN', MAGNETO...
...AN' THE ROAD.
JUST REMEMBER...
...IT DOESN'T HAVE T' BE THAT WAY.
FOR ALL OUR SAKES THEN, MY IRISH FRIEND...
...LET US PRAY THAT I AM WRONG.
AND MINE, THE ONLY SACRIFICE.
HE'S OFF.
AN' WE'VE MUCH T'DO.
CAL, I'M SENDIN' YOU TO NEW YORK.
THE MANSION THAT HOUSED XAVIER'S SCHOOL MAY'VE BEEN DESTROYED,* BUT ITS UNDERGROUND COMPLEX IS STILL INTACT.
WE CAN'T ALLOW ITS TECHNOLOGY TO FALL INTO THE WRONG HANDS.
I WANT THE PLACE SEALED TO ALL SAVE WE THREE AN' CHARLEY HIMSELF.
*BY MR. SINISTER, IN X-MEN #243. -- Bob
IS THAT WISE, ACCUSHLA?
S'POSE THE MUTANTS OR X-FACTOR TRY TO GAIN ENTRY?
BETTER TOO SAFE THAN TOO SORRY, MY LOVE, ESPECIALLY IF WE HAVE TO CONSIDER MAGNETO A POTENTIAL ADVERSARY.
WE'LL KEY THE SECURITY SYSTEMS TO ALERT US IF THEY DO.
NEXT ORDER OF PRIORITY IS FINDING THE NEW MUTANTS AND GETTING THEM HERE.
AN' THEN, SECURIN' MUIR ISLE AGAINST POSSIBLE ATTACK.
MOIRA MOIRA--
--WE'VE WEATHERED WORSE STORMS...
...THINGS'LL WORK OUT FINE, YOU'LL SEE.
WILL THEY, SEAN?
I WISH I WAS AS CERTAIN.
IT'S JUST, I HAVE THIS AWFUL FEELING...
...MAGNETO MAY BE RIGHT.


AUSTRALIA.
WHOZZAT COMIN'?
CAN I-- HAWHRR-- BELIEVE MY EYES?!
PULLIN' SOME TO THE RIGHT, COLE.
GUNSIGHT TRACKS FINE, MACON.
FAULT MUST BE IN YOUR INERTIAL TARGETING SYSTEM.
BE STILL MY HEART!
LOOKIN' TOP-LINE, PRETTY BOY.
HECK--WE SHOULD ALL LOOK SO GOOD.
WAIT YOUR TURN, REESE.
I'LL SEE WHAT CAN BE ARRANGED.
THIS WHA'CHU CALL YOUR BASIC "BARE BONES" CONFIGURATION?
HA HA, SKULL-BUSTER.
VERY FUNNY.
THAT PIERCE, BOY...
...THAT'S SOME SENSA-HUMOR.
HA HA HA HA
GO ON, THE LOT OF YOU, LAUGH YOURSELVES SICK.
WHATEVER IT TAKES, I'M GETTING MY RIGHTFUL BODY BACK.
AND THEN, THE LAST LAUGH--ON YOU AND PIERCE--
--IS GONNA BE MINE!
ELSEWHERE IN THE SPRAWLING UNDERGROUND COMPLEX...
...AS FULL OF NATURAL WONDERS AS TECHNOLOGICAL ONES...
...NOT LEAST OF WHICH IS THIS PRISTINE, FRESH-WATER LAKE...

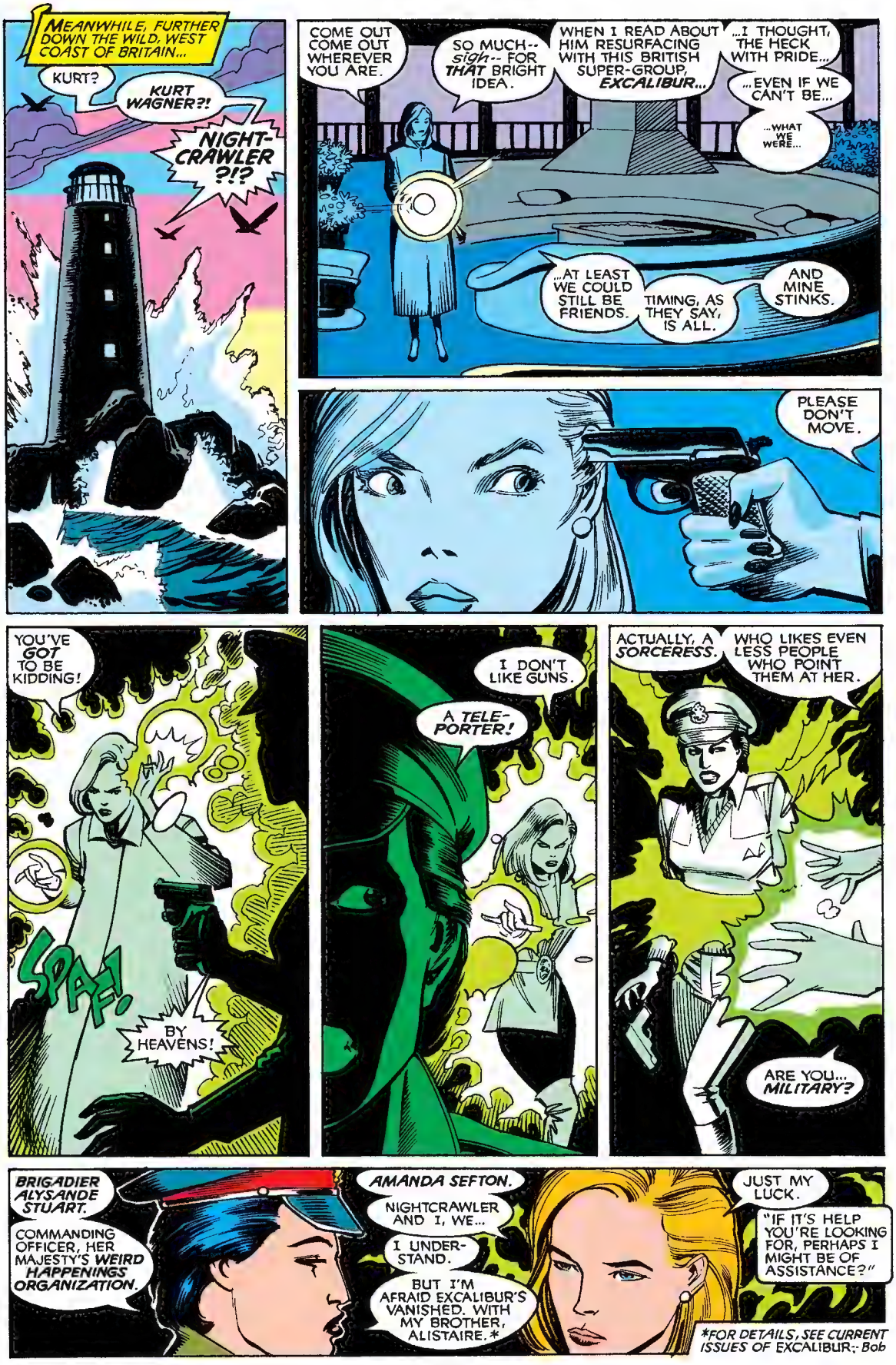

MAGNIFICENT!
A MERELY ADEQUATE DIVE, LORD.
I HAVE DONE BETTER.
I WAS REFERRING, LADY YURIKO...
...TO THE WOMAN.
HARDLY THAT, ANY LONGER.
THIS BODY IS AS MUCH MACHINE AS FLESH.
OUR BIONICS ARE NOTHING TO BE ASHAMED OF.
THEY MAKE US SUPERIOR BEINGS.
MORE THAN A MATCH FOR ANY MUTANT.
WHY DO YOU HATE THEM SO, PIERCE?
SIMPLE SURVIVAL.
IF WE DO NOT ERADICATE THEM...
...THEY WILL SURELY SUPPLANT US AS THE DOMINANT SPECIES ON THIS EARTH.
PERHAPS THAT IS THE NATURAL ORDER OF THINGS.
MAN WAS CREATED IN GOD'S IMAGE, LADY.
THESE CREATURES--EVEN THOSE WHO PASS FOR HUMAN--
--ARE BUT THE GROSSEST, FOULEST ABOMINATION.
HERE. ALLOW ME.
OUR IMMEDIATE CONCERN IS WOLVERINE.
PERHAPS HE PERISHED, OUT ON THE DESERT?
A TEMPTING FANTASY. I DON'T BELIEVE IT ANY MORE THAN YOU DO.
ASSUMING THE X-MAN SURVIVED...
...WHERE WOULD HE GO TO GROUND?
MADRIPOOR?
POSSIBLE. BUT DOUBTFUL.
JAPAN, THEN? TO SEEK AID FROM HIS LOVE, MARIKO YASHIDA?
ABSOLUTELY NOT.
HE LOVES HER. HE WOULD DIE BEFORE IMPERILING HER, OR THEIR FOSTER DAUGHTER, AKIKO.
YOU'RE NOT BEING HELPFUL, MY SWEET.
THINK, LADY DEATHSTRIKE--BE TRUER TO YOUR NAME--
--IF YOU WERE WOLVERINE...
...WHERE WOULD YOU TURN?

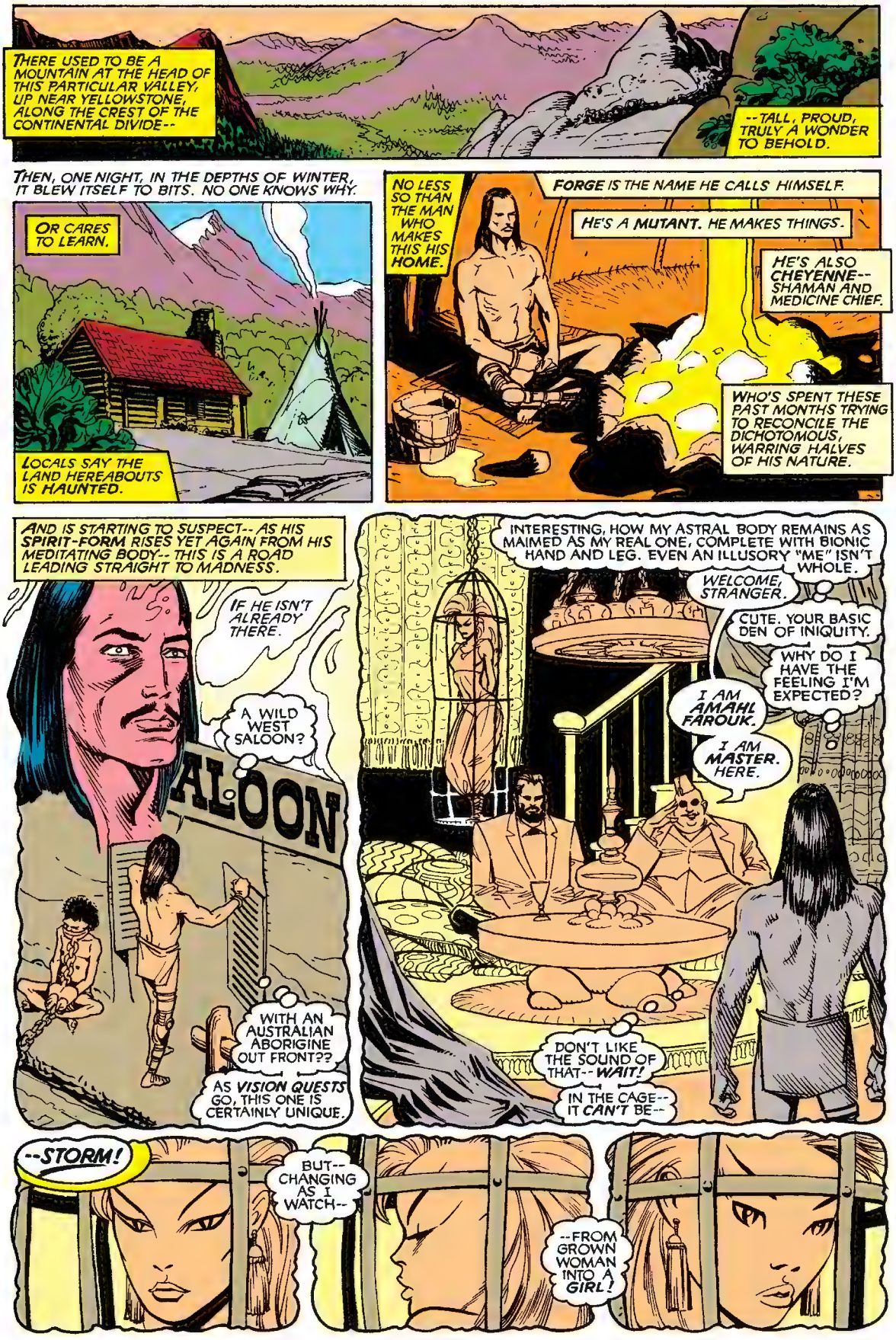

MUIR ISLE.
THE SHORT-WAVE, SEAN?
SOUNDS LIKE.
MAYDAY MAYDAY!
FREIGHTER ALHAMBRA, CALLING ANY STATION!
DISTRESS SIGNAL?
NOT SURE OF OUR POSITION.
SOME-WHERE OFF THE HEBRIDES.
CREW'S GONE CRAZY, THEY'RE SLAUGHTERING EACH OTHER!
HEAVY SEAS OUTSIDE, THE SHIP'S TOTALLY OUT OF CONTROL, WE NEED HELP!
SOUNDS PRETTY GRIM.
I KNOW THAT VOICE.
ALHAMBRA FROM MUIR ISLE, D'YE COPY?
SEAN? SEAN CASSIDY?! THANK HEAVENS I'VE REACHED A FRIEND!
IT'S ME, LORNA DANE!
?!?
IF SO, YE DON'T NEED OUR HELP.
I DON'T HAVE THEM ANYMORE!
YOUR OWN POWERS...
THEY WERE TAKEN FROM ME THE SAME TIME THE EVIL-- MALICE-- PERSONA WAS DESTROYED!
I'M NOT LYING, SEAN, THIS ISN'T SOME MARAUDER TRICK, THERE'S JUST ME!
KEEP BROAD-CASTING, LASS. WE'LL GET AN RDF FIX ON YOUR POSITION...
YOU'RE NOT GOING. AFTER ALL SHE'S DONE, HOW CAN WE TRUST HER?!
ONLY ONE WAY TO FIND OUT, ACCUSHLA.
WE'VE NO AIRCRAFT THAT CAN FLY IN THIS WEATHER.
THEN I SHAN'T USE ONE.
ARE YOU SURE YOU'RE UP TO THIS?
I'LL JUST HAVE T'BE, WON'T I?

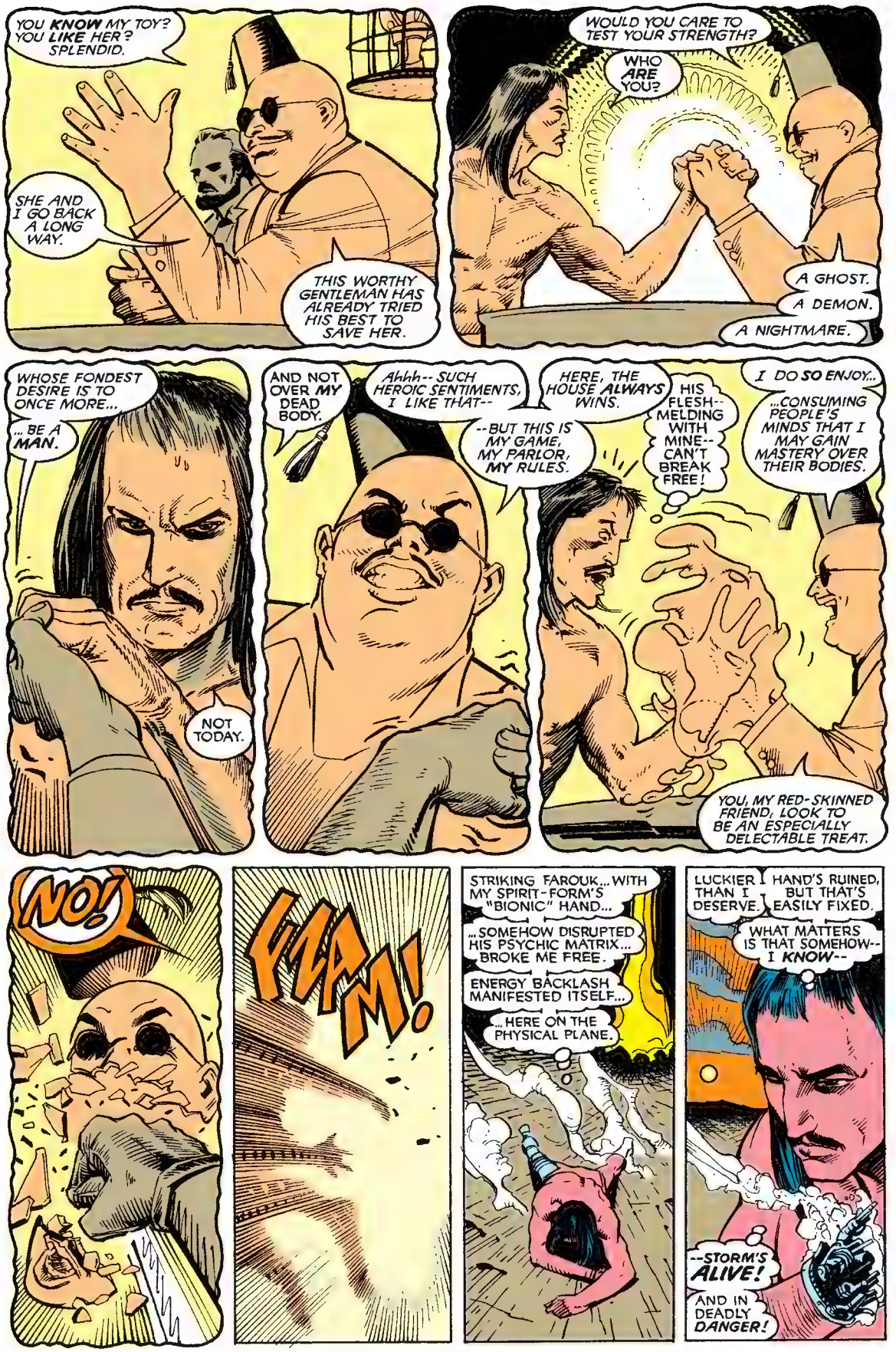

THE PAST FEW DAYS, THE WEATHER WORLD-WIDE HAS BEEN SO BAD, THAT EVEN THE MOST MODERN AND WELL-MAINTAINED OF VESSELS WOULD HAVE TROUBLE COPING WITH THESE MONSTROUS ATLANTIC SEAS.
THE FREIGHTER ALHAMBRA IS NEITHER.
AND EACH WAVE THAT CRASHES OVER HER RUSTY DECK BRINGS THE OLD SHIP THAT MUCH CLOSER TO HER END.
NOT THAT ANY OF HER CREW SEEMS MUCH TO CARE.
SHE'S MINE, CURSE YER EYES!
CRASH!
DOG OF A MUTINEER--
--I BROUGHT HER ABOARD...
...SHE BELONGS TO ME!
THEY'RE FIGHTING LIKE ANIMALS.
BUT WHY?! THERE WAS NO HINT OF THIS WHEN WE LEFT PORT.
EVER SINCE, EVERY-ONE BUT ME'S BEEN ACTING MORE AND MORE CRAZY!
GASP!
BLAM!
FOOL.
IF YOU'D WAITED YOUR TURN, I'D HAVE SHARED-- eh?!
FREIGHTER ALHAMBRA...
...THIS IS THE ROYAL NAVY COAST GUARD--
SQUAWRRK!
NO INTERFERENCE, NO MORE INTRUSIONS!
PLEASE, DON'T DO THIS!
ON YOUR FEET!
YOU AND ME, GIRL, IT'S OUR TIME TO...
...PARTY...
SANCTA MARIA--
--WHAT'S HAPPENED TO YOU?!?

I DON'T BELIEVE THIS!
I'VE GROWN-- JUST LIKE IN THE SAVAGE LAND!*
HEY, IT'S OKAY, NOTHING TO BE AFRAID OF.
PUT DOWN THE GUN, BABY, WE'LL PARTY ALL YOU WANT.
*X-MEN #250.-- Bob
HE'S SHOOTING--
NO!
GET AWAY FROM ME, YOU FREAK!
BLAM BLAM BLAM BLAM
THE BULLETS-- THEY'RE BOUNCING OFF ME!
BUT I'M LOSING MY BALANCE, FALLING BACKWARDS!!
THERE SHE IS!
GET HER!
THE WALL--THAT'S WOOD PANELING OVER STEEL AND I SMASHED THROUGH LIKE IT WAS RICE PAPER.
SIZE, INVULNERABILITY-- AND SUPER-STRENGTH AS WELL--
--WHAT IS HEY!?!
CRIPES, SOME FOLKS JUST WON'T TAKE "NO" FOR AN ANSWER!
MAYBE THIS WILL CONVINCE THEM!
SKRAMM
A WAVE!
GRAB FOR LIFELINES-- HANDHOLDS-- ANYTHING--
--OR YOU'LL BE SWEPT AWAY!
TOO LATE.
WHAT'S THAT NOISE?
IT IS METAL-- TEARING?!

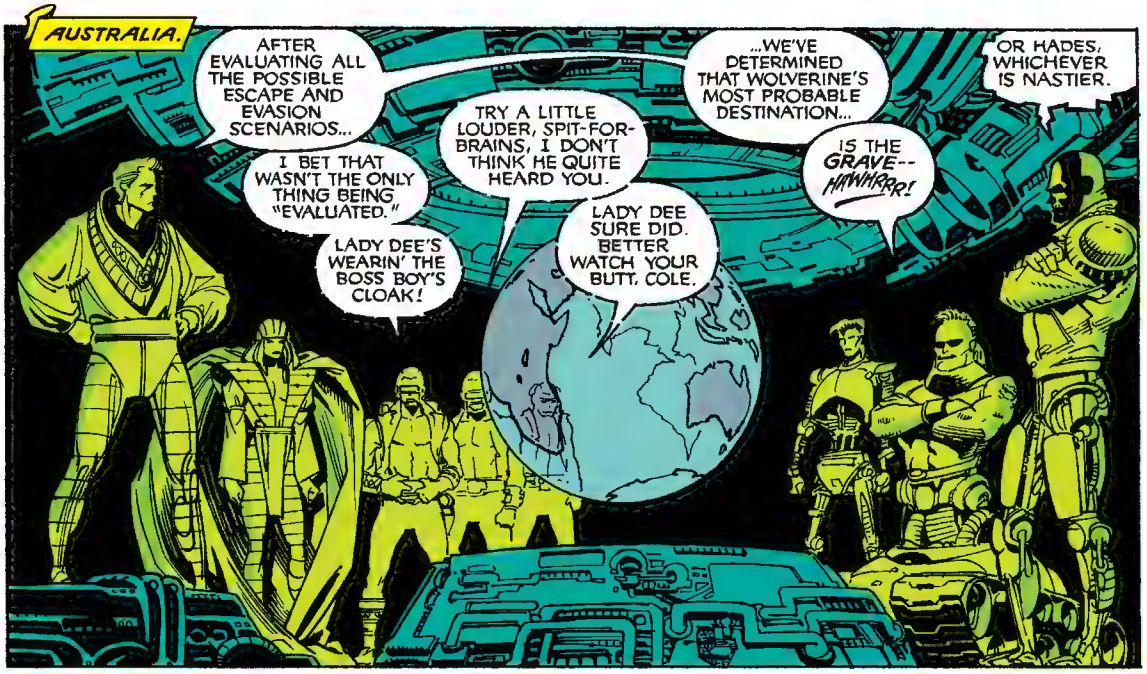
THE SHIP--
--BREAKING IN HALF!
WONDER HOW LONG I CAN LAST OUT HERE?
THE CAPTAIN!
HERE! TAKE MY HAND! I CAN SAVE YOU!
GO TO THE DEVIL, YOU WITCH!
SHAK!
HE--HE WANTED TO HURT ME MORE THAN TO LIVE!
WHAT'S THAT AWFUL SCREAMING?!!
THIS IS INSANE-- THE STERN SECTION-- CAPSIZING!
EEEE

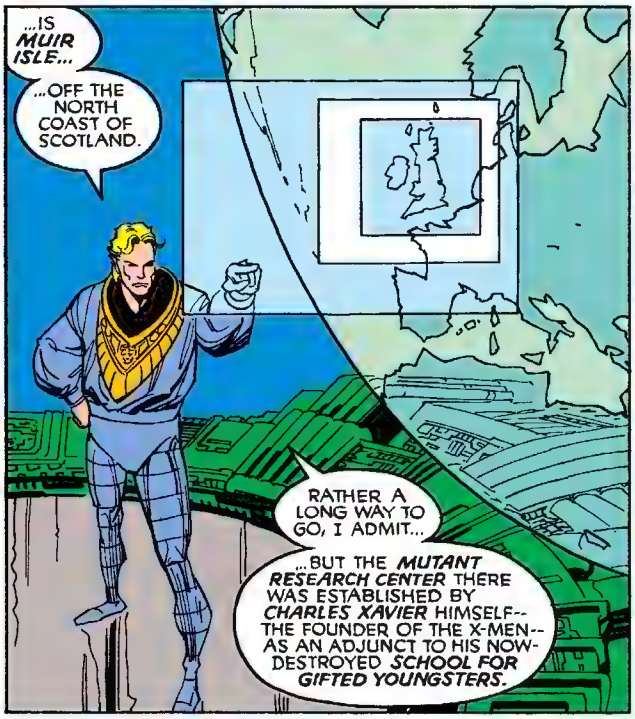

MEANWHILE, FURTHER DOWN THE WILD, WEST COAST OF BRITAIN...
KURT?
KURT WAGNER?!
NIGHT-CRAWLER ?!?
COME OUT COME OUT WHEREVER YOU ARE.
SO MUCH-- sigh-- FOR THAT BRIGHT IDEA.
WHEN I READ ABOUT HIM RESURFACING WITH THIS BRITISH SUPER-GROUP, EXCALIBUR...
...I THOUGHT, THE HECK WITH PRIDE...
...EVEN IF WE CAN'T BE...
...WHAT WE WERE...
...AT LEAST WE COULD STILL BE FRIENDS.
TIMING, AS THEY SAY, IS ALL.
AND MINE STINKS.
PLEASE DON'T MOVE.
YOU'VE GOT TO BE KIDDING!
SPAF!
BY HEAVENS!
I DON'T LIKE GUNS.
A TELE-PORTER!
ACTUALLY, A SORCERESS.
WHO LIKES EVEN LESS PEOPLE WHO POINT THEM AT HER.
ARE YOU... MILITARY?
BRIGADIER ALYSANDE STUART.
COMMANDING OFFICER, HER MAJESTY'S WEIRD HAPPENINGS ORGANIZATION.
AMANDA SEFTON.
NIGHTCRAWLER AND I, WE...
I UNDER-STAND.
BUT I'M AFRAID EXCALIBUR'S VANISHED. WITH MY BROTHER, ALISTAIRE.*
JUST MY LUCK.
"IF IT'S HELP YOU'RE LOOKING FOR, PERHAPS I MIGHT BE OF ASSISTANCE?"
*FOR DETAILS, SEE CURRENT ISSUES OF EXCALIBUR;- Bob

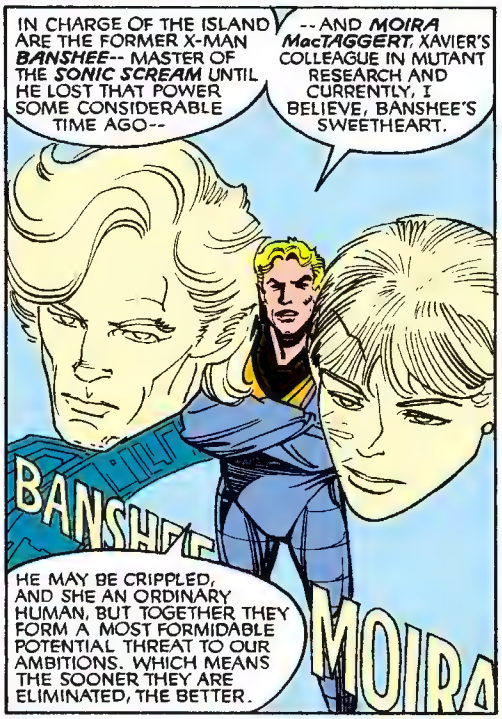

THERE USED TO BE A MOUNTAIN AT THE HEAD OF THIS PARTICULAR VALLEY, UP NEAR YELLOWSTONE, ALONG THE CREST OF THE CONTINENTAL DIVIDE--
--TALL, PROUD, TRULY A WONDER TO BEHOLD.
THEN, ONE NIGHT, IN THE DEPTHS OF WINTER, IT BLEW ITSELF TO BITS. NO ONE KNOWS WHY.
OR CARES TO LEARN.
LOCALS SAY THE LAND HEREABOUTS IS HAUNTED.
NO LESS SO THAN THE MAN WHO MAKES THIS HIS HOME.
FORGE IS THE NAME HE CALLS HIMSELF.
HE'S A MUTANT. HE MAKES THINGS.
HE'S ALSO CHEYENNE--SHAMAN AND MEDICINE CHIEF.
WHO'S SPENT THESE PAST MONTHS TRYING TO RECONCILE THE DICHOTOMOUS, WARRING HALVES OF HIS NATURE.
AND IS STARTING TO SUSPECT-- AS HIS SPIRIT-FORM RISES YET AGAIN FROM HIS MEDITATING BODY-- THIS IS A ROAD LEADING STRAIGHT TO MADNESS.
IF HE ISN'T ALREADY THERE.
A WILD WEST SALOON?
SALOON
WITH AN AUSTRALIAN ABORIGINE OUT FRONT??
AS VISION QUESTS GO, THIS ONE IS CERTAINLY UNIQUE.
INTERESTING, HOW MY ASTRAL BODY REMAINS AS MAIMED AS MY REAL ONE, COMPLETE WITH BIONIC HAND AND LEG. EVEN AN ILLUSORY "ME" ISN'T WHOLE.
WELCOME, STRANGER.
CUTE. YOUR BASIC DEN OF INIQUITY.
WHY DO I HAVE THE FEELING I'M EXPECTED?
I AM AMAHL FAROUK.
I AM MASTER. HERE.
DON'T LIKE THE SOUND OF THAT-- WAIT!
IN THE CAGE-- IT CAN'T BE--
--STORM!
BUT-- CHANGING AS I WATCH--
--FROM GROWN WOMAN INTO A GIRL!


YOU KNOW MY TOY? YOU LIKE HER? SPLENDID.
SHE AND I GO BACK A LONG WAY.
THIS WORTHY GENTLEMAN HAS ALREADY TRIED HIS BEST TO SAVE HER.
WOULD YOU CARE TO TEST YOUR STRENGTH?
WHO ARE YOU?
A GHOST.
A DEMON.
A NIGHTMARE.
WHOSE FONDEST DESIRE IS TO ONCE MORE...
...BE A MAN.
NOT TODAY.
AND NOT OVER MY DEAD BODY.
Ahhh-- SUCH HEROIC SENTIMENTS, I LIKE THAT--
--BUT THIS IS MY GAME, MY PARLOR, MY RULES.
HERE, THE HOUSE ALWAYS WINS.
HIS FLESH-- MELDING WITH MINE-- CAN'T BREAK FREE!
I DO SO ENJOY...
...CONSUMING PEOPLE'S MINDS THAT I MAY GAIN MASTERY OVER THEIR BODIES.
YOU, MY RED-SKINNED FRIEND, LOOK TO BE AN ESPECIALLY DELECTABLE TREAT.
NO!
FZAM!
STRIKING FAROUK... WITH MY SPIRIT-FORM'S "BIONIC" HAND...
...SOMEHOW DISRUPTED HIS PSYCHIC MATRIX... BROKE ME FREE.
ENERGY BACKLASH MANIFESTED ITSELF...
...HERE ON THE PHYSICAL PLANE.
LUCKIER THAN I DESERVE.
HAND'S RUINED, BUT THAT'S EASILY FIXED.
WHAT MATTERS IS THAT SOMEHOW-- I KNOW--
--STORM'S ALIVE!
AND IN DEADLY DANGER!

CAIRO MEMORIAL HOSPITAL.
SHE'S JUST A KID.
SHE'S A MUTANT.
SO WHAT?
SO--EVERYTHING.
SHE LOOKS SO PEACEFUL ASLEEP.
APPEARANCES ARE DECEIVING. JUST LOOK AT THE MONITOR FOR PROOF.
HOW CAN SHE DO ANY HARM?
DO I WANT TO BE THE ONE TO FIND OUT?
IS IT WRONG TO BE A RESPONSIBLE CITIZEN?
IS THIS BEING "RESPONSIBLE"?
BIP BIP BAP BIP
BRINNNG
BRINNNG
BRINNNG
REISZ HERE.
DR. SHEN? THAT GIRL I SENT IN YESTERDAY? SHE'S A WHAT??
NO, NO, DOCTOR. THERE'S NOTHING TO BE UPSET ABOUT.
YOU DID THE RIGHT THING, CALLING THE FBI.
AS CHIEF OF THE MIDWEST DIVISION, I'LL BE MORE THAN HAPPY TO HANDLE THIS PERSONALLY.
THANKS INSPECTOR REISZ, YOU'VE TAKEN A LOAD OFF MY MIND.
WE'LL EXPECT YOU IN THE MORNING.
AND DON'T WORRY, THE GIRL WILL BE READY.


AUSTRALIA.
AFTER EVALUATING ALL THE POSSIBLE ESCAPE AND EVASION SCENARIOS...
I BET THAT WASN'T THE ONLY THING BEING "EVALUATED."
LADY DEE'S WEARIN' THE BOSS BOY'S CLOAK!
TRY A LITTLE LOUDER, SPIT-FOR-BRAINS, I DON'T THINK HE QUITE HEARD YOU.
LADY DEE SURE DID. BETTER WATCH YOUR BUTT, COLE.
...WE'VE DETERMINED THAT WOLVERINE'S MOST PROBABLE DESTINATION...
IS THE GRAVE-- HAWHRRR!
OR HADES, WHICHEVER IS NASTIER.


...IS MUIR ISLE...
...OFF THE NORTH COAST OF SCOTLAND.
RATHER A LONG WAY TO GO, I ADMIT...
...BUT THE MUTANT RESEARCH CENTER THERE WAS ESTABLISHED BY CHARLES XAVIER HIMSELF-- THE FOUNDER OF THE X-MEN-- AS AN ADJUNCT TO HIS NOW-DESTROYED SCHOOL FOR GIFTED YOUNGSTERS.


IN CHARGE OF THE ISLAND ARE THE FORMER X-MAN BANSHEE-- MASTER OF THE SONIC SCREAM UNTIL HE LOST THAT POWER SOME CONSIDERABLE TIME AGO--
--AND MOIRA MacTAGGERT, XAVIER'S COLLEAGUE IN MUTANT RESEARCH AND CURRENTLY, I BELIEVE, BANSHEE'S SWEETHEART.
BANSHEE
MOIRA
HE MAY BE CRIPPLED, AND SHE AN ORDINARY HUMAN, BUT TOGETHER THEY FORM A MOST FORMIDABLE POTENTIAL THREAT TO OUR AMBITIONS. WHICH MEANS THE SOONER THEY ARE ELIMINATED, THE BETTER.

I WANT THE ISLAND LEVELED, THE RESEARCH CENTER DESTROYED, EVERY MUTANT FOUND THERE SLAUGHTERED. BUT MOST IMPORTANTLY OF ALL...
... I WANT THOSE TWO KILLED.
TO BE CONTINUED-- IN 2 WEEKS!

MARVEL
THE UNCANNY
X-MEN
TM
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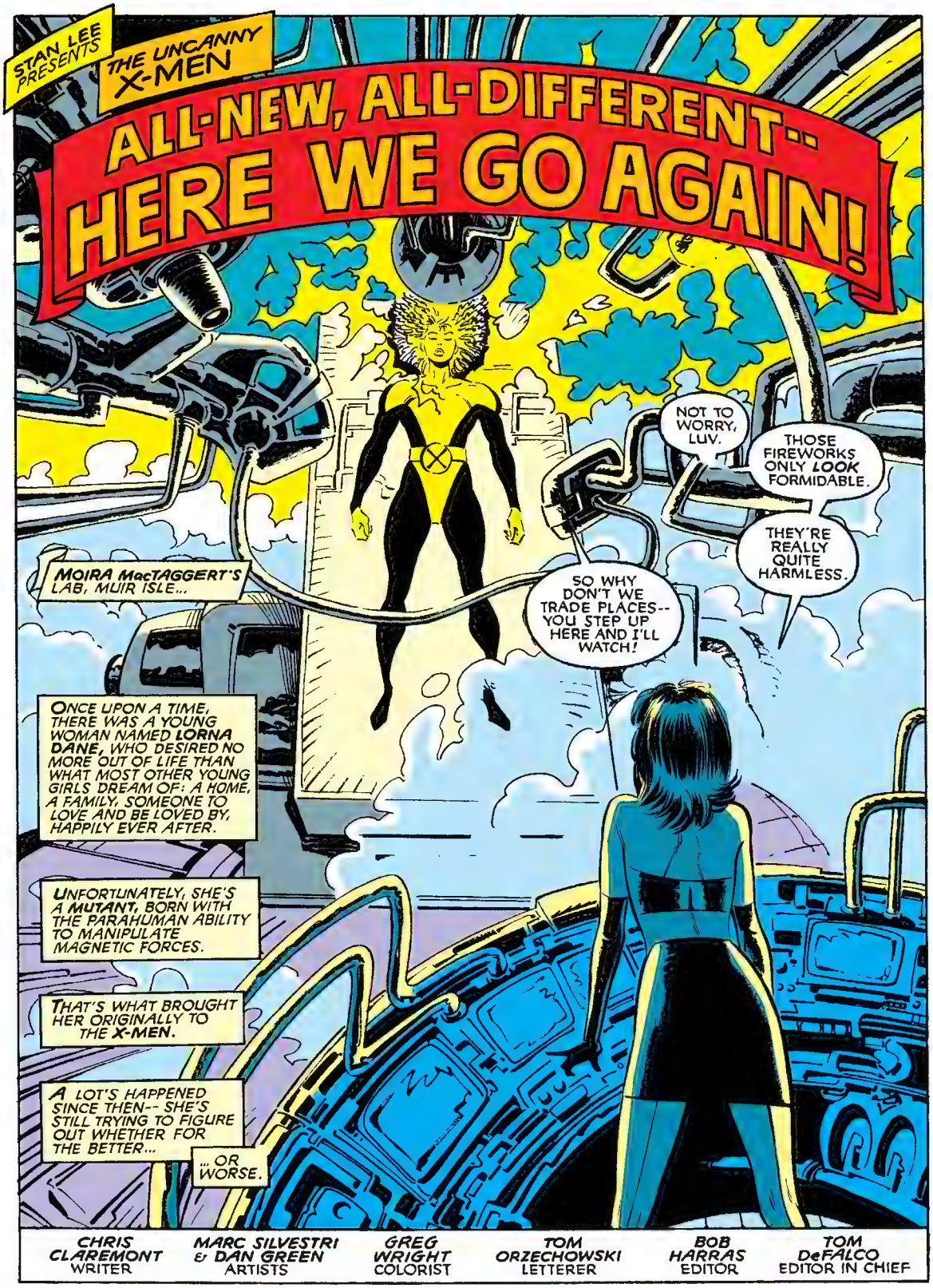
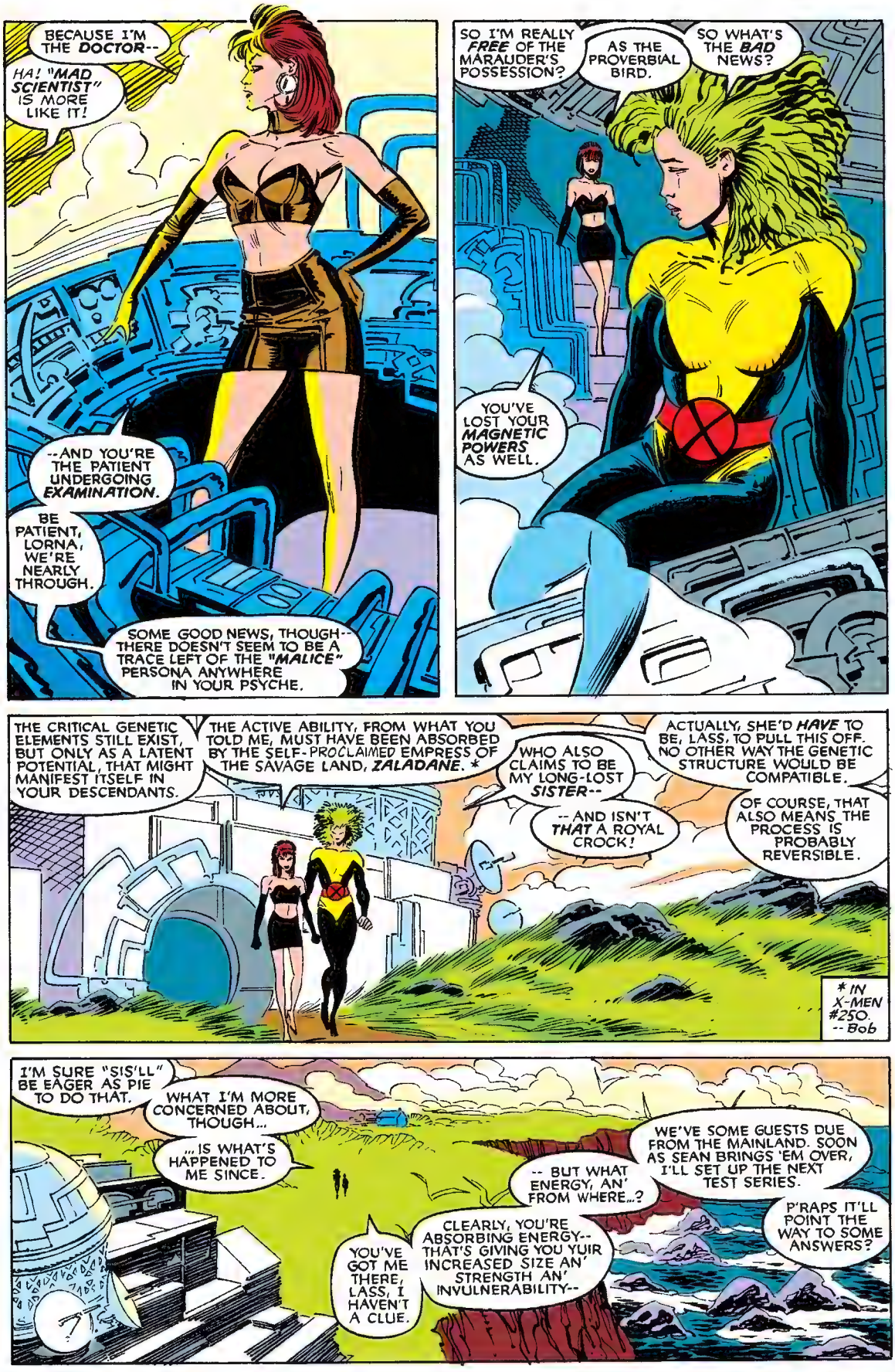
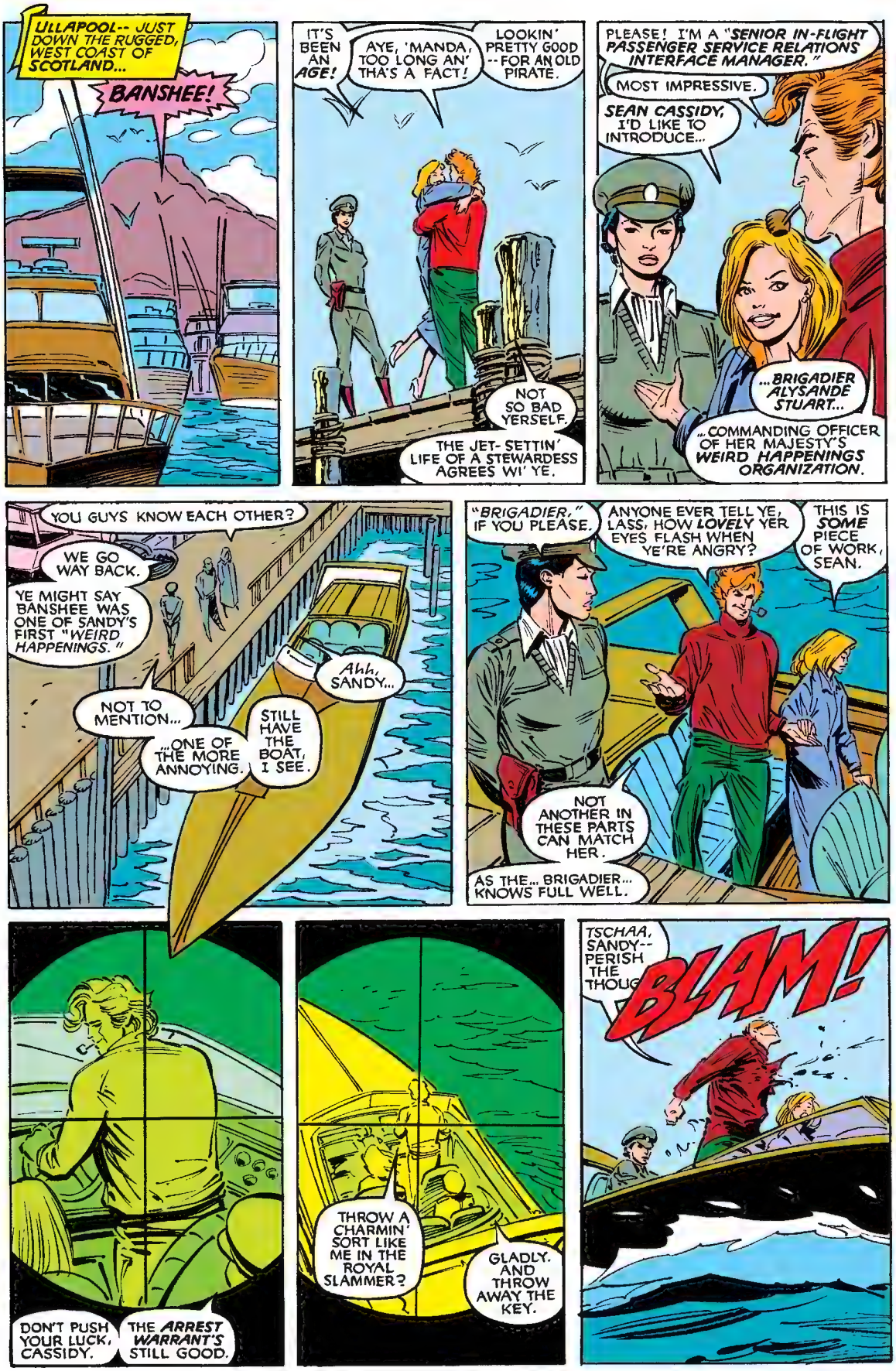
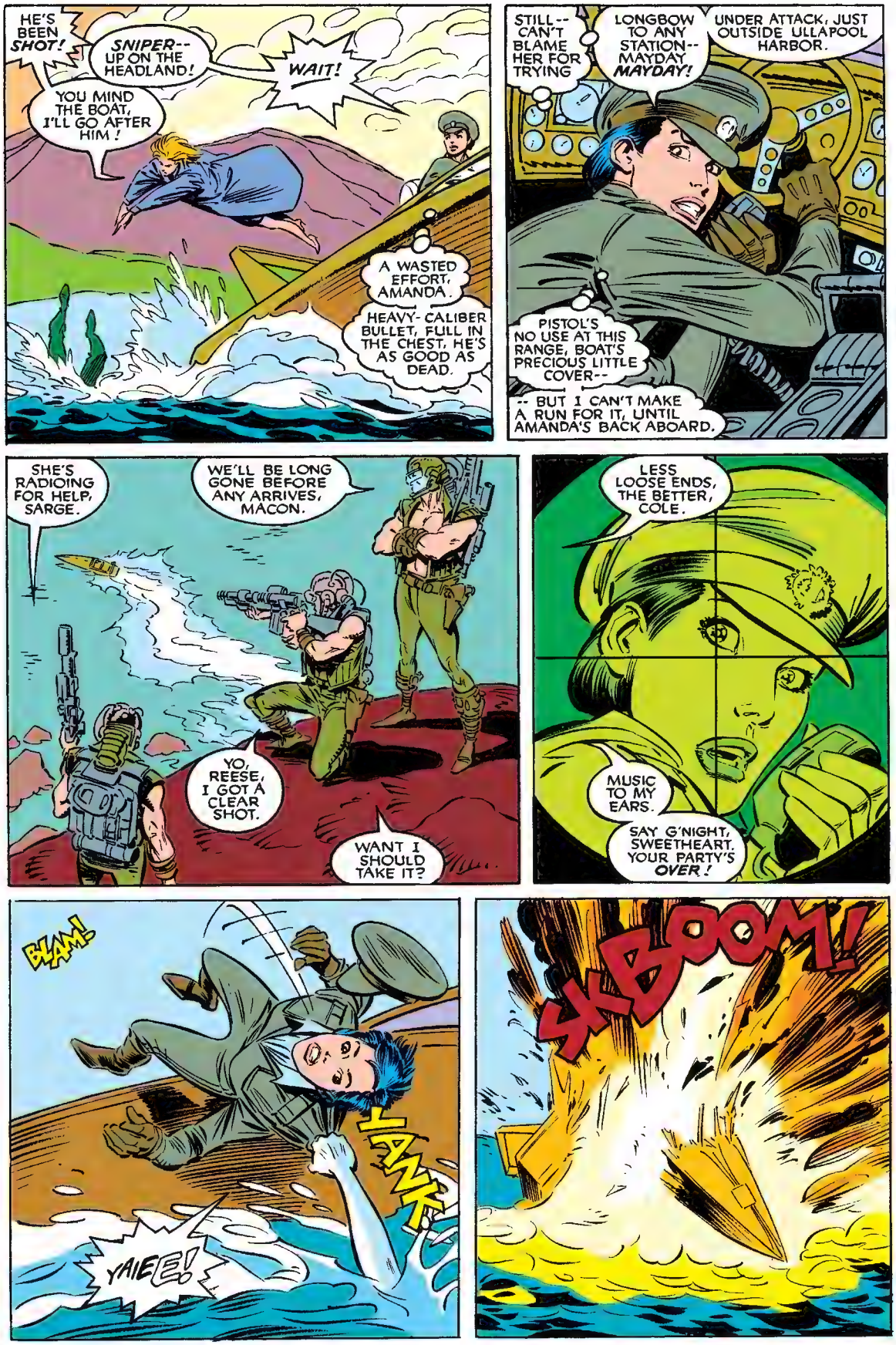
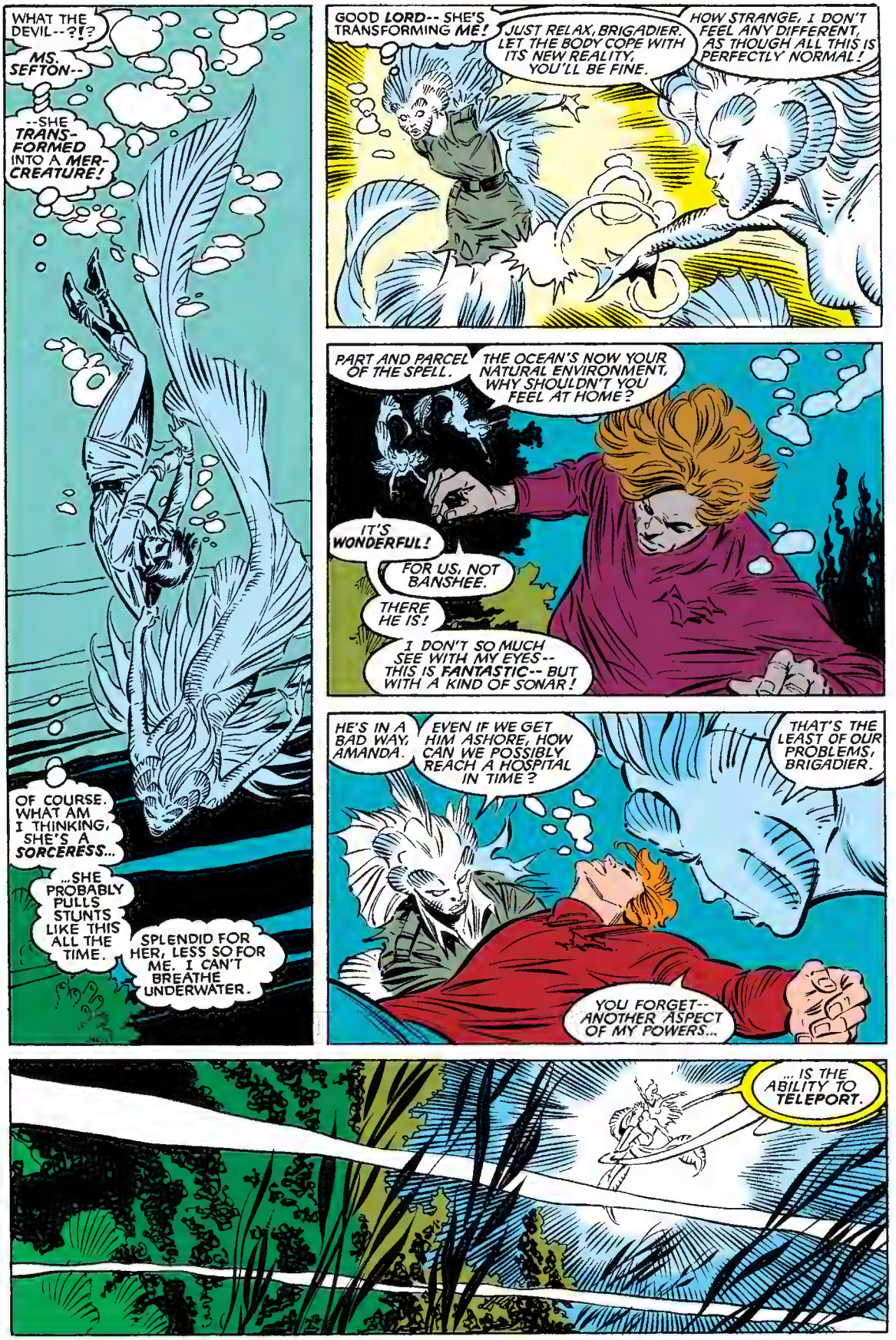
APPROVED BY THE COMICS CODE
AUTHORITY
TO SAVE THE DREAM..
A NEW LEGEND IS BORN!

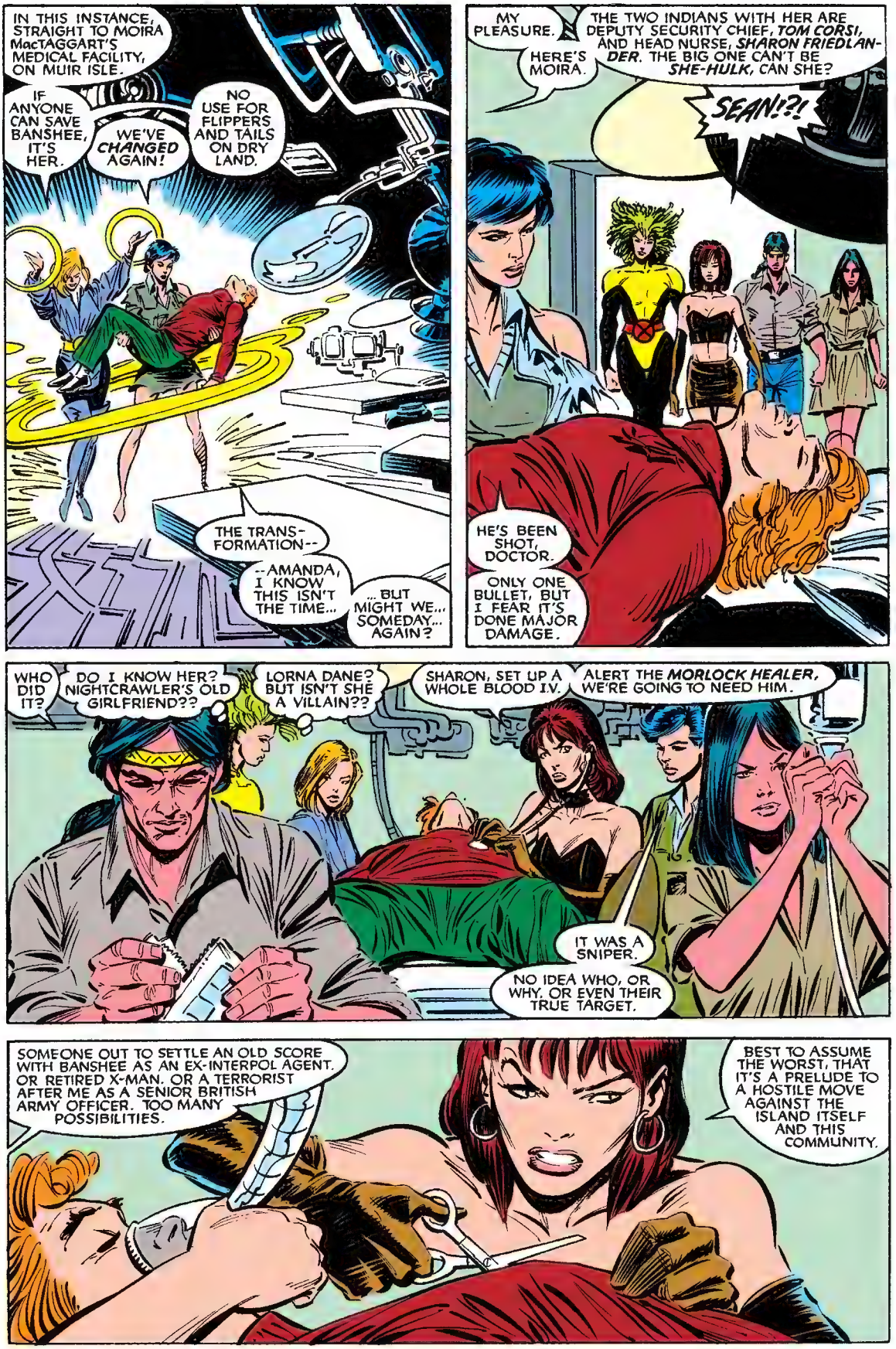

STAN LEE PRESENTS
THE UNCANNY X-MEN
ALL-NEW, ALL-DIFFERENT--
HERE WE GO AGAIN!
NOT TO WORRY, LUV.
THOSE FIREWORKS ONLY LOOK FORMIDABLE.
THEY'RE REALLY QUITE HARMLESS.
SO WHY DON'T WE TRADE PLACES-- YOU STEP UP HERE AND I'LL WATCH!
MOIRA MacTAGGERT'S LAB, MUIR ISLE...
ONCE UPON A TIME, THERE WAS A YOUNG WOMAN NAMED LORNA DANE, WHO DESIRED NO MORE OUT OF LIFE THAN WHAT MOST OTHER YOUNG GIRLS DREAM OF: A HOME, A FAMILY, SOMEONE TO LOVE AND BE LOVED BY, HAPPILY EVER AFTER.
UNFORTUNATELY, SHE'S A MUTANT, BORN WITH THE PARAHUMAN ABILITY TO MANIPULATE MAGNETIC FORCES.
THAT'S WHAT BROUGHT HER ORIGINALLY TO THE X-MEN.
A LOT'S HAPPENED SINCE THEN-- SHE'S STILL TRYING TO FIGURE OUT WHETHER FOR THE BETTER...
... OR WORSE.
CHRIS CLAREMONT WRITER
MARC SILVESTRI & DAN GREEN ARTISTS
GREG WRIGHT COLORIST
TOM ORZECHOWSKI LETTERER
BOB HARRAS EDITOR
TOM DeFALCO EDITOR IN CHIEF

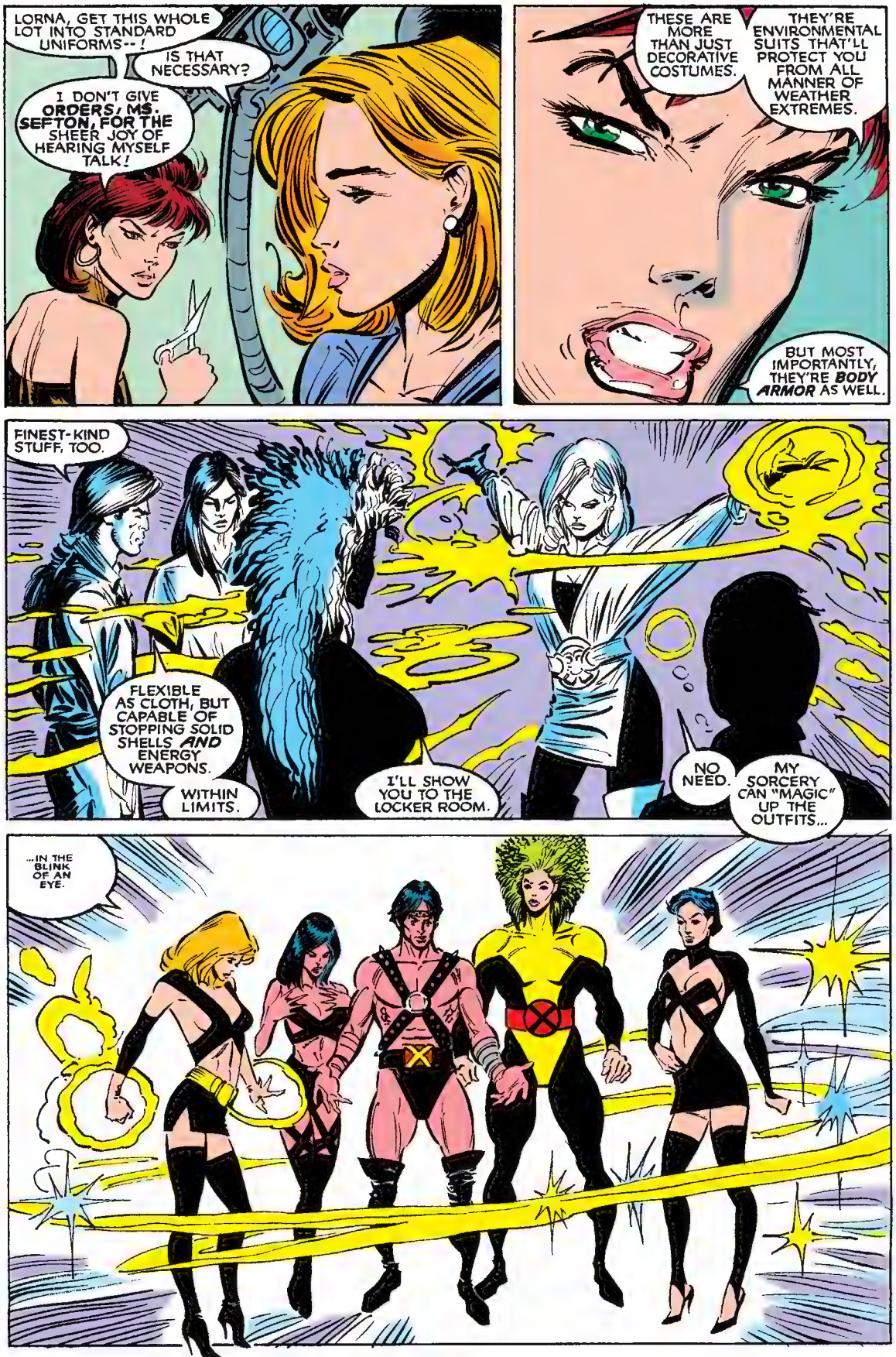

BECAUSE I'M THE DOCTOR--
HA! "MAD SCIENTIST" IS MORE LIKE IT!
--AND YOU'RE THE PATIENT UNDERGOING EXAMINATION.
BE PATIENT, LORNA, WE'RE NEARLY THROUGH.
SOME GOOD NEWS, THOUGH-- THERE DOESN'T SEEM TO BE A TRACE LEFT OF THE "MALICE" PERSONA ANYWHERE IN YOUR PSYCHE.
SO I'M REALLY FREE OF THE MARAUDER'S POSSESSION?
AS THE PROVERBIAL BIRD.
SO WHAT'S THE BAD NEWS?
YOU'VE LOST YOUR MAGNETIC POWERS AS WELL.
THE CRITICAL GENETIC ELEMENTS STILL EXIST, BUT ONLY AS A LATENT POTENTIAL, THAT MIGHT MANIFEST ITSELF IN YOUR DESCENDANTS.
THE ACTIVE ABILITY, FROM WHAT YOU TOLD ME, MUST HAVE BEEN ABSORBED BY THE SELF-PROCLAIMED EMPRESS OF THE SAVAGE LAND, ZALADANE. *
WHO ALSO CLAIMS TO BE MY LONG-LOST SISTER--
--AND ISN'T THAT A ROYAL CROCK!
ACTUALLY, SHE'D HAVE TO BE, LASS, TO PULL THIS OFF. NO OTHER WAY THE GENETIC STRUCTURE WOULD BE COMPATIBLE.
OF COURSE, THAT ALSO MEANS THE PROCESS IS PROBABLY REVERSIBLE.
* IN X-MEN #250. -- Bob
I'M SURE "SIS'LL" BE EAGER AS PIE TO DO THAT.
WHAT I'M MORE CONCERNED ABOUT, THOUGH...
...IS WHAT'S HAPPENED TO ME SINCE.
YOU'VE GOT ME THERE, LASS, I HAVEN'T A CLUE.
CLEARLY, YOU'RE ABSORBING ENERGY-- THAT'S GIVING YOU YUIR INCREASED SIZE AN' STRENGTH AN' INVULNERABILITY--
-- BUT WHAT ENERGY, AN' FROM WHERE...?
WE'VE SOME GUESTS DUE FROM THE MAINLAND. SOON AS SEAN BRINGS 'EM OVER, I'LL SET UP THE NEXT TEST SERIES.
P'RAPS IT'LL POINT THE WAY TO SOME ANSWERS?

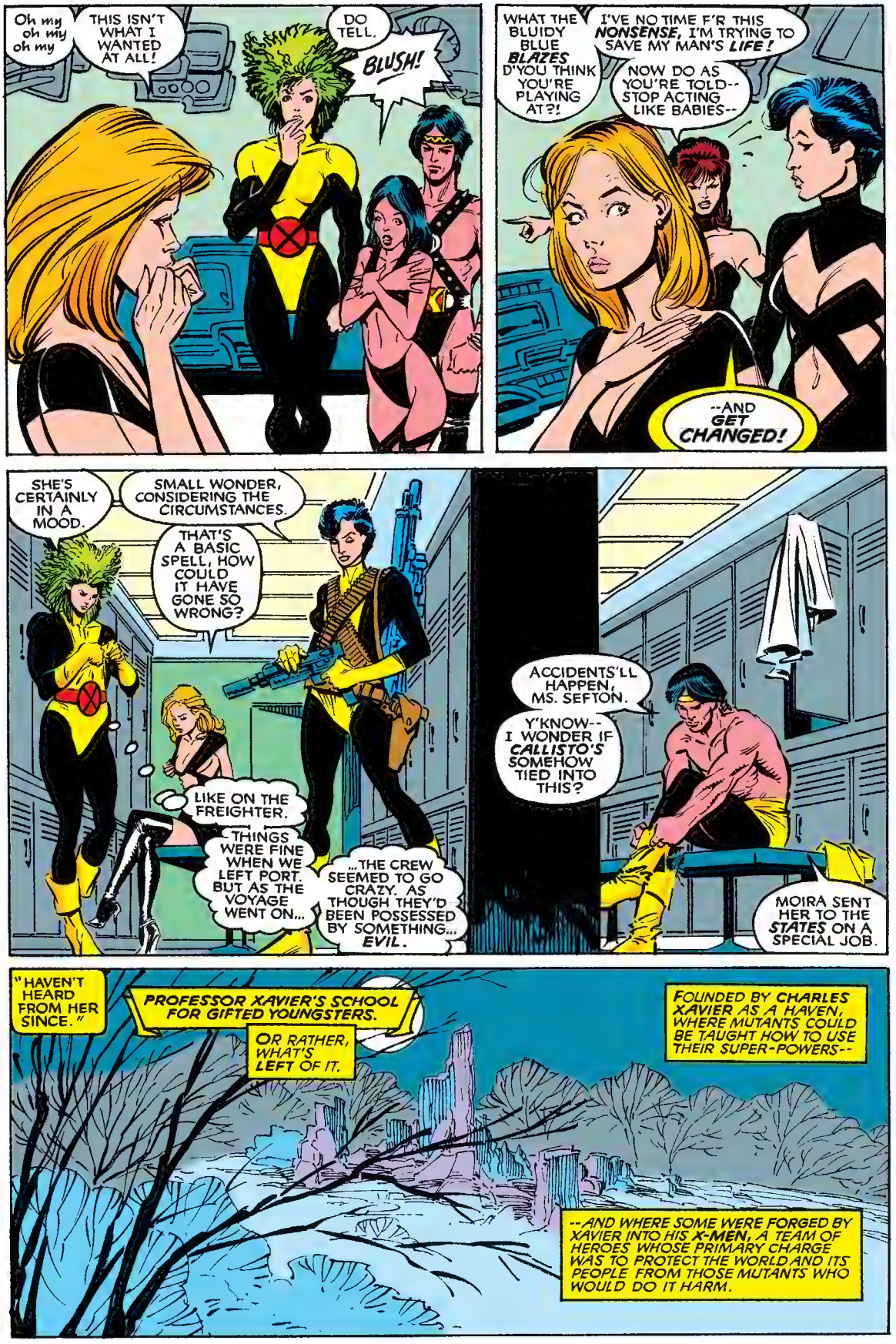

ULLAPOOL-- JUST DOWN THE RUGGED, WEST COAST OF SCOTLAND...
BANSHEE!
IT'S BEEN AN AGE!
AYE, 'MANDA, TOO LONG AN' THA'S A FACT!
LOOKIN' PRETTY GOOD -- FOR AN OLD PIRATE.
NOT SO BAD YERSELF.
THE JET-SETTIN' LIFE OF A STEWARDESS AGREES WI' YE.
PLEASE! I'M A "SENIOR IN-FLIGHT PASSENGER SERVICE RELATIONS INTERFACE MANAGER."
MOST IMPRESSIVE.
SEAN CASSIDY, I'D LIKE TO INTRODUCE...
...BRIGADIER ALYSANDE STUART...
...COMMANDING OFFICER OF HER MAJESTY'S WEIRD HAPPENINGS ORGANIZATION.
YOU GUYS KNOW EACH OTHER?
WE GO WAY BACK.
YE MIGHT SAY BANSHEE WAS ONE OF SANDY'S FIRST "WEIRD HAPPENINGS."
NOT TO MENTION...
...ONE OF THE MORE ANNOYING.
STILL HAVE THE BOAT, I SEE.
Ahh, SANDY...
"BRIGADIER," IF YOU PLEASE.
ANYONE EVER TELL YE, LASS, HOW LOVELY YER EYES FLASH WHEN YE'RE ANGRY?
THIS IS SOME PIECE OF WORK, SEAN.
NOT ANOTHER IN THESE PARTS CAN MATCH HER.
AS THE... BRIGADIER... KNOWS FULL WELL.
DON'T PUSH YOUR LUCK, CASSIDY.
THE ARREST WARRANT'S STILL GOOD.
THROW A CHARMIN' SORT LIKE ME IN THE ROYAL SLAMMER?
GLADLY. AND THROW AWAY THE KEY.
TSCHAA, SANDY-- PERISH THE THOUG
BLAM!

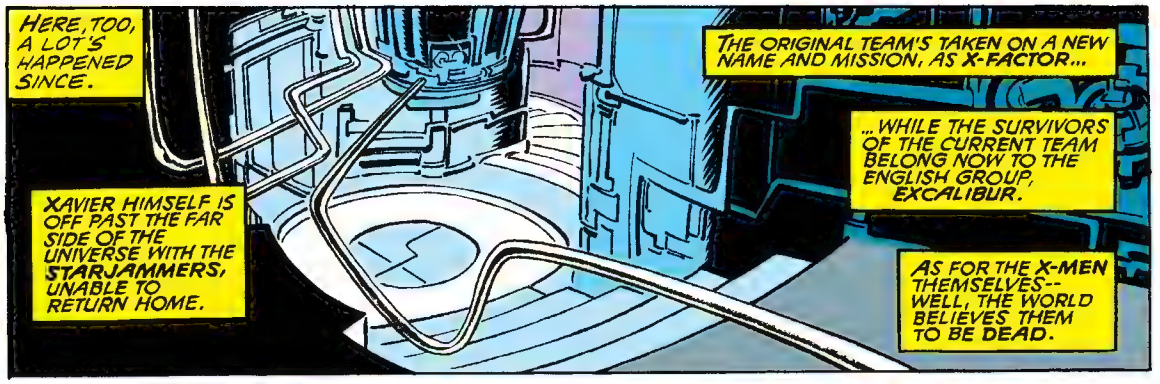

HE'S BEEN SHOT!
SNIPER-- UP ON THE HEADLAND!
WAIT!
YOU MIND THE BOAT, I'LL GO AFTER HIM!
A WASTED EFFORT, AMANDA.
HEAVY-CALIBER BULLET, FULL IN THE CHEST. HE'S AS GOOD AS DEAD.
STILL-- CAN'T BLAME HER FOR TRYING
LONGBOW TO ANY STATION-- MAYDAY, MAYDAY!
UNDER ATTACK, JUST OUTSIDE ULLAPOOL HARBOR.
PISTOL'S NO USE AT THIS RANGE, BOAT'S PRECIOUS LITTLE COVER--
-- BUT I CAN'T MAKE A RUN FOR IT, UNTIL AMANDA'S BACK ABOARD.
SHE'S RADIOING FOR HELP, SARGE.
WE'LL BE LONG GONE BEFORE ANY ARRIVES, MACON.
YO, REESE, I GOT A CLEAR SHOT.
WANT I SHOULD TAKE IT?
LESS LOOSE ENDS, THE BETTER, COLE.
MUSIC TO MY EARS.
SAY G'NIGHT, SWEETHEART. YOUR PARTY'S OVER!
BLAM!
YAIEEE!
KABOOM!

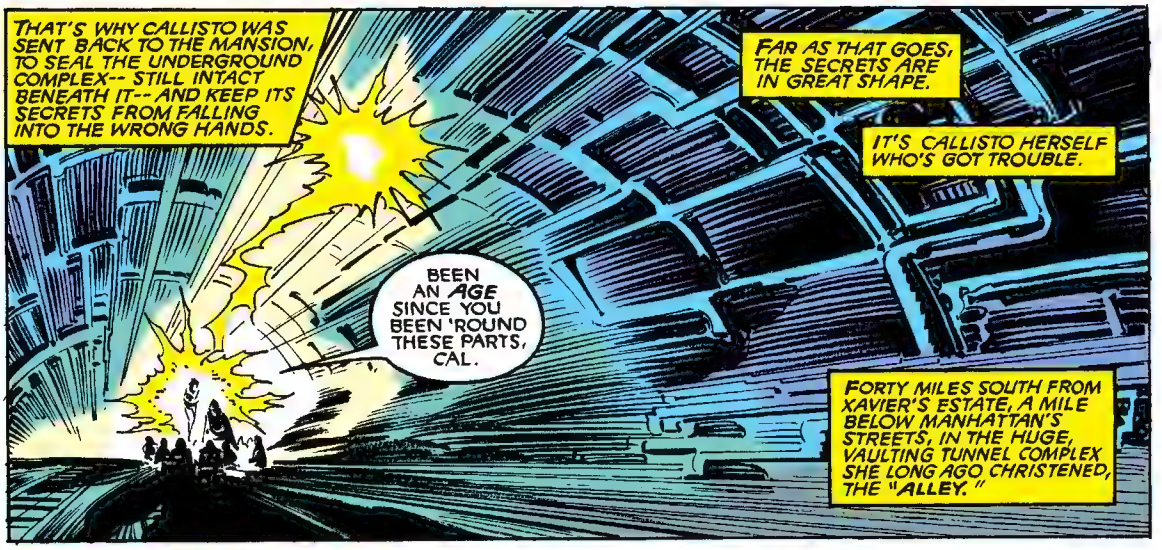

WHAT THE DEVIL--?!?
MS. SEFTON--
--SHE TRANS-FORMED INTO A MER-CREATURE!
OF COURSE. WHAT AM I THINKING; SHE'S A SORCERESS...
...SHE PROBABLY PULLS STUNTS LIKE THIS ALL THE TIME.
SPLENDID FOR HER, LESS SO FOR ME. I CAN'T BREATHE UNDERWATER.
GOOD LORD-- SHE'S TRANSFORMING ME!
JUST RELAX, BRIGADIER. LET THE BODY COPE WITH ITS NEW REALITY, YOU'LL BE FINE.
HOW STRANGE, I DON'T FEEL ANY DIFFERENT, AS THOUGH ALL THIS IS PERFECTLY NORMAL!
PART AND PARCEL OF THE SPELL.
THE OCEAN'S NOW YOUR NATURAL ENVIRONMENT, WHY SHOULDN'T YOU FEEL AT HOME?
IT'S WONDERFUL!
FOR US, NOT BANSHEE.
THERE HE IS!
I DON'T SO MUCH SEE WITH MY EYES-- THIS IS FANTASTIC-- BUT WITH A KIND OF SONAR!
HE'S IN A BAD WAY, AMANDA.
EVEN IF WE GET HIM ASHORE, HOW CAN WE POSSIBLY REACH A HOSPITAL IN TIME?
THAT'S THE LEAST OF OUR PROBLEMS, BRIGADIER.
YOU FORGET-- ANOTHER ASPECT OF MY POWERS...
... IS THE ABILITY TO TELEPORT.


IN THIS INSTANCE, STRAIGHT TO MOIRA MacTAGGART'S MEDICAL FACILITY, ON MUIR ISLE.
IF ANYONE CAN SAVE BANSHEE, IT'S HER.
WE'VE CHANGED AGAIN!
NO USE FOR FLIPPERS AND TAILS ON DRY LAND.
THE TRANS-FORMATION--
--AMANDA, I KNOW THIS ISN'T THE TIME...
... BUT MIGHT WE... SOMEDAY... AGAIN?
MY PLEASURE.
HERE'S MOIRA.
THE TWO INDIANS WITH HER ARE DEPUTY SECURITY CHIEF, TOM CORSI, AND HEAD NURSE, SHARON FRIEDLANDER. THE BIG ONE CAN'T BE SHE-HULK, CAN SHE?
SEAN!?!
HE'S BEEN SHOT, DOCTOR.
ONLY ONE BULLET, BUT I FEAR IT'S DONE MAJOR DAMAGE.
WHO DID IT?
DO I KNOW HER? NIGHTCRAWLER'S OLD GIRLFRIEND??
LORNA DANE? BUT ISN'T SHE A VILLAIN??
SHARON, SET UP A WHOLE BLOOD I.V.
ALERT THE MORLOCK HEALER, WE'RE GOING TO NEED HIM.
IT WAS A SNIPER.
NO IDEA WHO, OR WHY, OR EVEN THEIR TRUE TARGET.
SOMEONE OUT TO SETTLE AN OLD SCORE WITH BANSHEE AS AN EX-INTERPOL AGENT. OR RETIRED X-MAN. OR A TERRORIST AFTER ME AS A SENIOR BRITISH ARMY OFFICER. TOO MANY POSSIBILITIES.
BEST TO ASSUME THE WORST, THAT IT'S A PRELUDE TO A HOSTILE MOVE AGAINST THE ISLAND ITSELF AND THIS COMMUNITY.


LORNA, GET THIS WHOLE LOT INTO STANDARD UNIFORMS--!
IS THAT NECESSARY?
I DON'T GIVE ORDERS, MS. SEFTON, FOR THE SHEER JOY OF HEARING MYSELF TALK!
THESE ARE MORE THAN JUST DECORATIVE COSTUMES.
THEY'RE ENVIRONMENTAL SUITS THAT'LL PROTECT YOU FROM ALL MANNER OF WEATHER EXTREMES.
BUT MOST IMPORTANTLY, THEY'RE BODY ARMOR AS WELL.
FINEST-KIND STUFF, TOO.
FLEXIBLE AS CLOTH, BUT CAPABLE OF STOPPING SOLID SHELLS AND ENERGY WEAPONS.
WITHIN LIMITS.
I'LL SHOW YOU TO THE LOCKER ROOM.
NO NEED.
MY SORCERY CAN "MAGIC" UP THE OUTFITS...
...IN THE BLINK OF AN EYE.

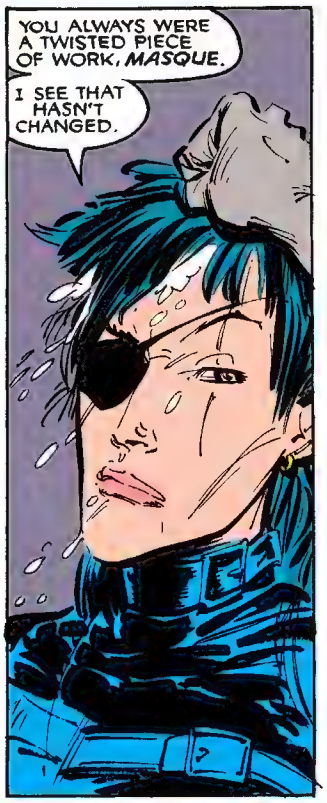

Oh my oh my oh my
THIS ISN'T WHAT I WANTED AT ALL!
DO TELL.
BLUSH!
WHAT THE BLUIDY BLUE BLAZES D'YOU THINK YOU'RE PLAYING AT?!
I'VE NO TIME F'R THIS NONSENSE, I'M TRYING TO SAVE MY MAN'S LIFE!
NOW DO AS YOU'RE TOLD-- STOP ACTING LIKE BABIES--
--AND GET CHANGED!
SHE'S CERTAINLY IN A MOOD.
SMALL WONDER, CONSIDERING THE CIRCUMSTANCES.
THAT'S A BASIC SPELL, HOW COULD IT HAVE GONE SO WRONG?
LIKE ON THE FREIGHTER.
THINGS WERE FINE WHEN WE LEFT PORT. BUT AS THE VOYAGE WENT ON...
...THE CREW SEEMED TO GO CRAZY. AS THOUGH THEY'D BEEN POSSESSED BY SOMETHING... EVIL.
ACCIDENTS'LL HAPPEN, MS. SEFTON.
Y'KNOW-- I WONDER IF CALLISTO'S SOMEHOW TIED INTO THIS?
MOIRA SENT HER TO THE STATES ON A SPECIAL JOB.
"HAVEN'T HEARD FROM HER SINCE."
PROFESSOR XAVIER'S SCHOOL FOR GIFTED YOUNGSTERS.
OR RATHER, WHAT'S LEFT OF IT.
FOUNDED BY CHARLES XAVIER AS A HAVEN, WHERE MUTANTS COULD BE TAUGHT HOW TO USE THEIR SUPER-POWERS--
--AND WHERE SOME WERE FORGED BY XAVIER INTO HIS X-MEN, A TEAM OF HEROES WHOSE PRIMARY CHARGE WAS TO PROTECT THE WORLD AND ITS PEOPLE FROM THOSE MUTANTS WHO WOULD DO IT HARM.

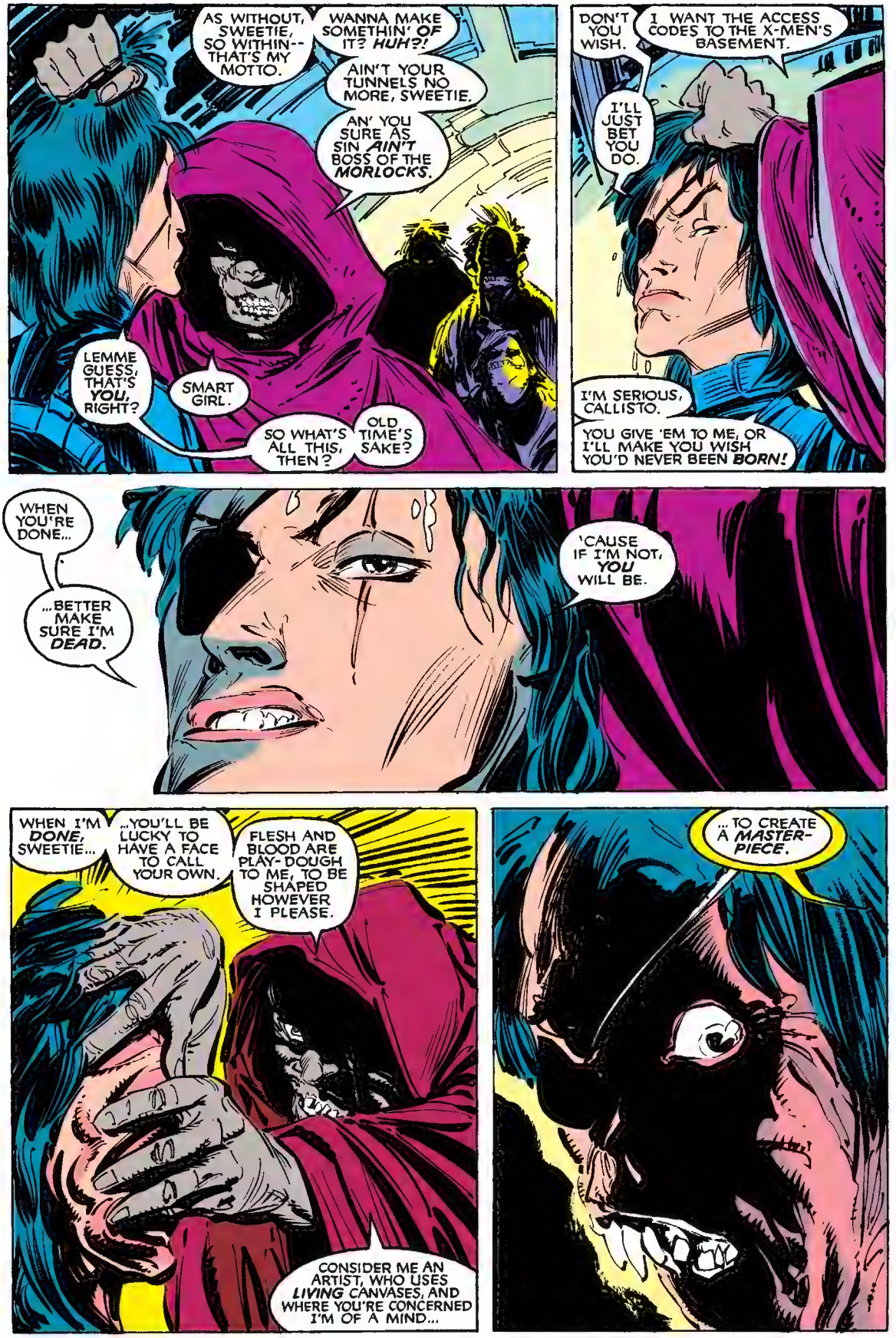

HERE, TOO, A LOT'S HAPPENED SINCE.
THE ORIGINAL TEAM'S TAKEN ON A NEW NAME AND MISSION, AS X-FACTOR...
...WHILE THE SURVIVORS OF THE CURRENT TEAM BELONG NOW TO THE ENGLISH GROUP, EXCALIBUR.
XAVIER HIMSELF IS OFF PAST THE FAR SIDE OF THE UNIVERSE WITH THE STARJAMMERS, UNABLE TO RETURN HOME.
AS FOR THE X-MEN THEMSELVES-- WELL, THE WORLD BELIEVES THEM TO BE DEAD.


THAT'S WHY CALLISTO WAS SENT BACK TO THE MANSION, TO SEAL THE UNDERGROUND COMPLEX-- STILL INTACT BENEATH IT-- AND KEEP ITS SECRETS FROM FALLING INTO THE WRONG HANDS.
FAR AS THAT GOES, THE SECRETS ARE IN GREAT SHAPE.
IT'S CALLISTO HERSELF WHO'S GOT TROUBLE.
BEEN AN AGE SINCE YOU BEEN 'ROUND THESE PARTS, CAL.
FORTY MILES SOUTH FROM XAVIER'S ESTATE, A MILE BELOW MANHATTAN'S STREETS, IN THE HUGE, VAULTING TUNNEL COMPLEX SHE LONG AGO CHRISTENED, THE "ALLEY."

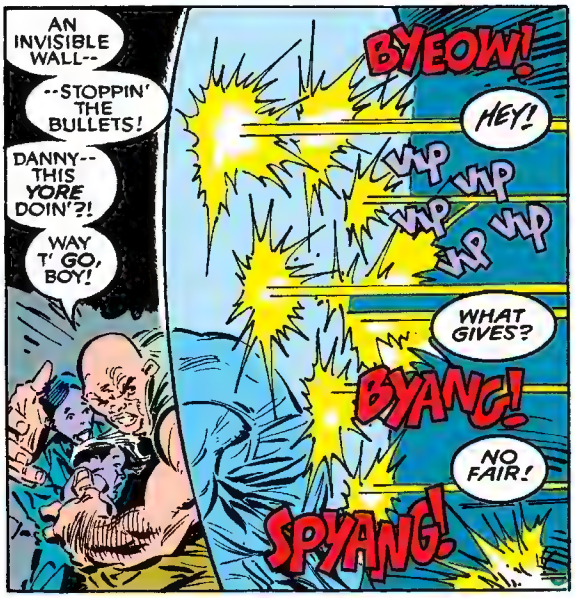
LIKE THE WAY WE WELCOME YOU HOME?

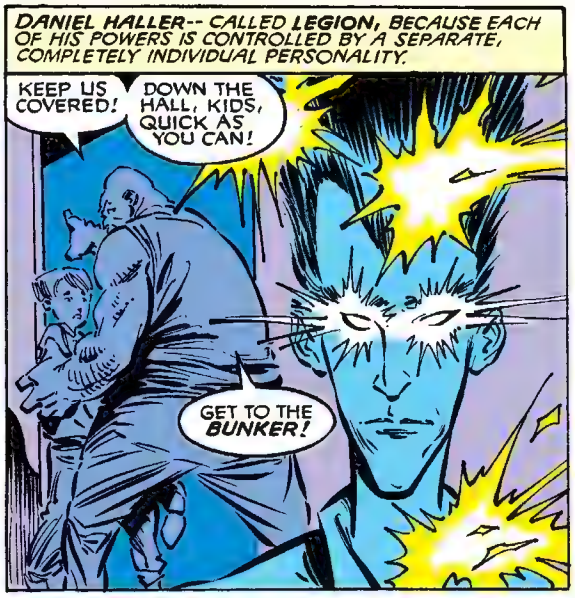
SURE YOU DO.

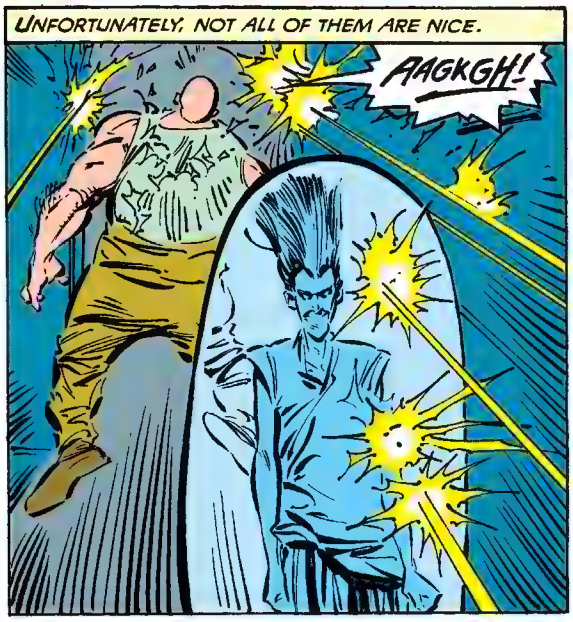

YOU ALWAYS WERE A TWISTED PIECE OF WORK, MASQUE.
I SEE THAT HASN'T CHANGED.


AS WITHOUT, SWEETIE, SO WITHIN-- THAT'S MY MOTTO.
WANNA MAKE SOMETHIN' OF IT? HUH?!
AIN'T YOUR TUNNELS NO MORE, SWEETIE.
AN' YOU SURE AS SIN AIN'T BOSS OF THE MORLOCKS.
LEMME GUESS, THAT'S YOU, RIGHT?
SMART GIRL.
SO WHAT'S ALL THIS, THEN?
OLD TIME'S SAKE?
DON'T YOU WISH.
I WANT THE ACCESS CODES TO THE X-MEN'S BASEMENT.
I'LL JUST BET YOU DO.
I'M SERIOUS, CALLISTO.
YOU GIVE 'EM TO ME, OR I'LL MAKE YOU WISH YOU'D NEVER BEEN BORN!
WHEN YOU'RE DONE...
...BETTER MAKE SURE I'M DEAD.
'CAUSE IF I'M NOT, YOU WILL BE.
WHEN I'M DONE, SWEETIE...
...YOU'LL BE LUCKY TO HAVE A FACE TO CALL YOUR OWN.
FLESH AND BLOOD ARE PLAY-DOUGH TO ME, TO BE SHAPED HOWEVER I PLEASE.
CONSIDER ME AN ARTIST, WHO USES LIVING CANVASES, AND WHERE YOU'RE CONCERNED I'M OF A MIND...
...TO CREATE A MASTER-PIECE.

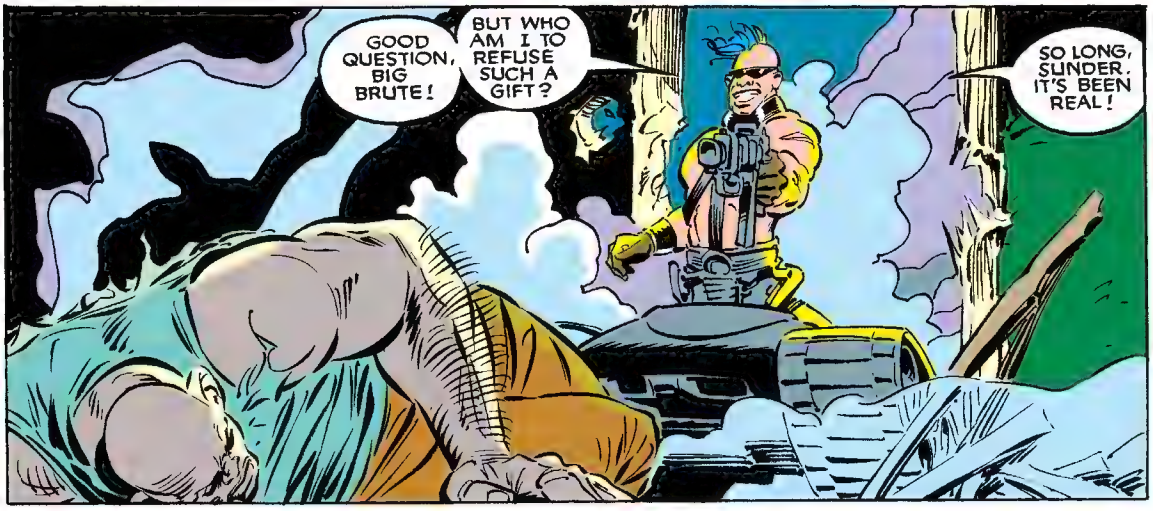
MUIR ISLE...
THROUGH AN ASSOCIATION WITH THE WEIRD HAPPENINGS ORGANIZATION -- AND ITS SUBORDINATE, RCX, THE RESOURCES CONTROL EXECUTIVE --
--MOIRA'S RESEARCH COMPLEX HAS, IN RECENT MONTHS, BECOME HOME...
...TO THE PARA-NORMAL -- AND IN SOME CASES, NOT EVEN MARGINALLY HUMAN -- CHILDREN KNOWN AS WARPIES...
...AS WELL AS THOSE FEW MORLOCKS, SUCH AS SUNDER, TO SURVIVE THE MASSACRE THAT TURNED THEIR ALLEY INTO A CHARNEL HOUSE.*
*IN X-MEN #211 -- Bob
FOR THEM, THIS MORNING, IT SEEMS...
...HISTORY'S ABOUT TO REPEAT ITSELF...
YAIEE!
LOOK OUT!
SHABOOM!
HIYA, KIDDIES. I'M SKULLBUSTER!
BONEBREAKER!
PRETTYBOY!
BLAM
BLAM
BLAM
BRAKKA
BRAKKA
WE'RE THE REAVERS!
AN' WE'VE COME TO -- hawhrr -- KILL YOU!


AN INVISIBLE WALL--
--STOPPIN' THE BULLETS!
DANNY-- THIS YORE DOIN'?!
WAY T' GO, BOY!
BYEOW!
HEY!
VVP VVP VVP VVP
WHAT GIVES?
BYANG!
NO FAIR!
SPYANG!

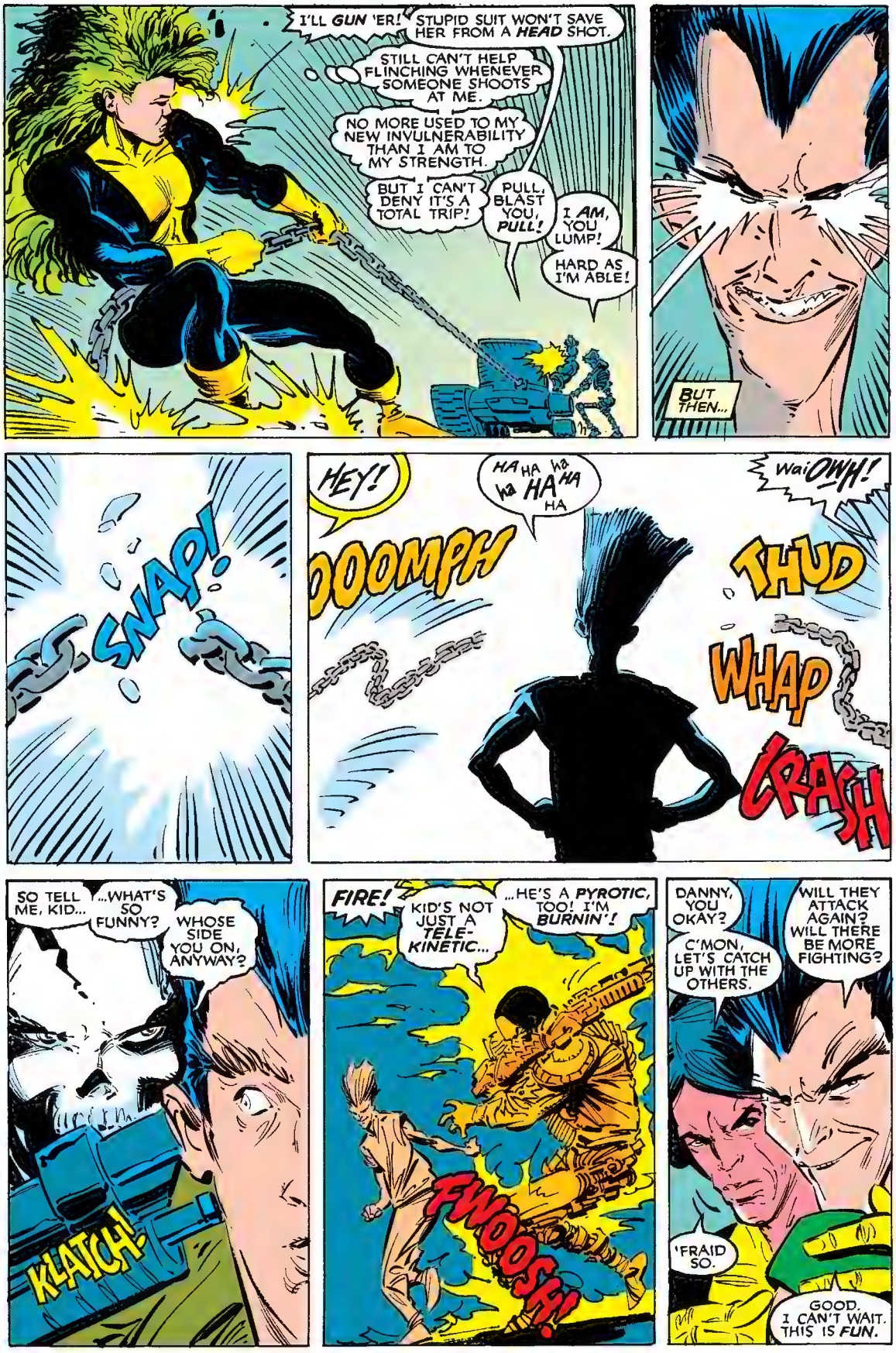

DANIEL HALLER-- CALLED LEGION, BECAUSE EACH OF HIS POWERS IS CONTROLLED BY A SEPARATE, COMPLETELY INDIVIDUAL PERSONALITY.
KEEP US COVERED!
DOWN THE HALL, KIDS, QUICK AS YOU CAN!
GET TO THE BUNKER!

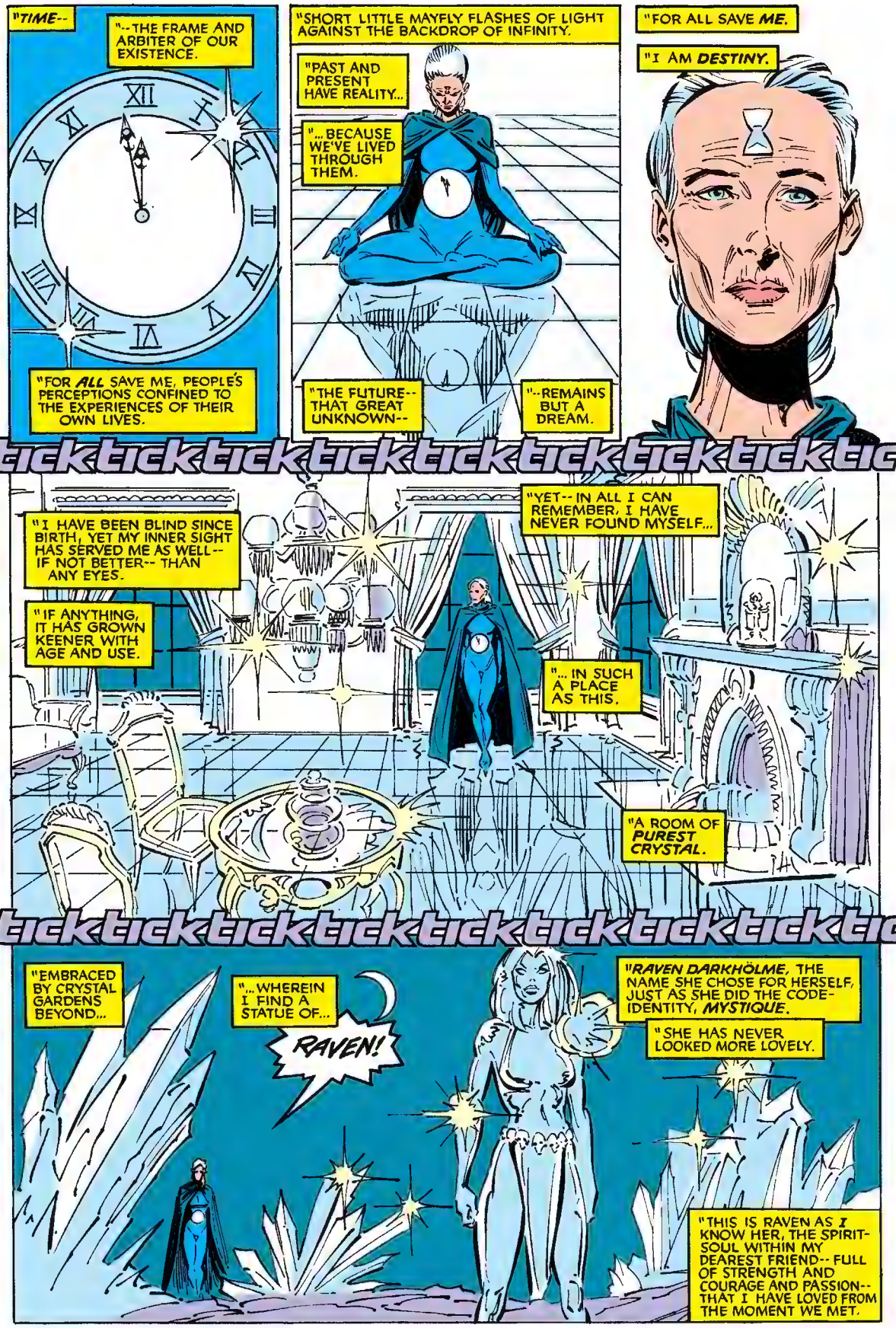

UNFORTUNATELY, NOT ALL OF THEM ARE NICE.
AAGKGH!

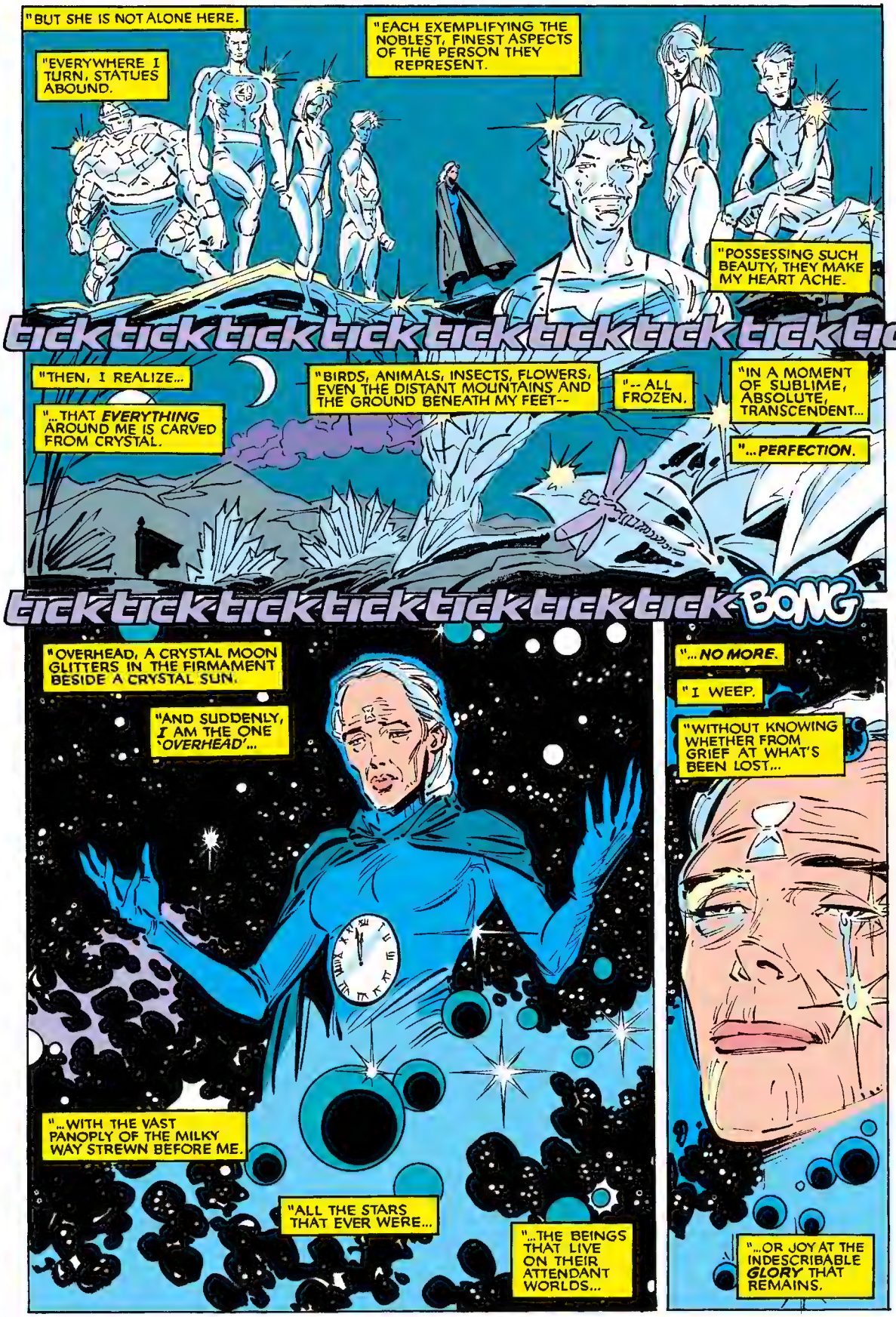
DANNY--
--WHY'D YOU DROP YOUR SHIELD?!
HELP HELP HELP
RUN RUN RUN

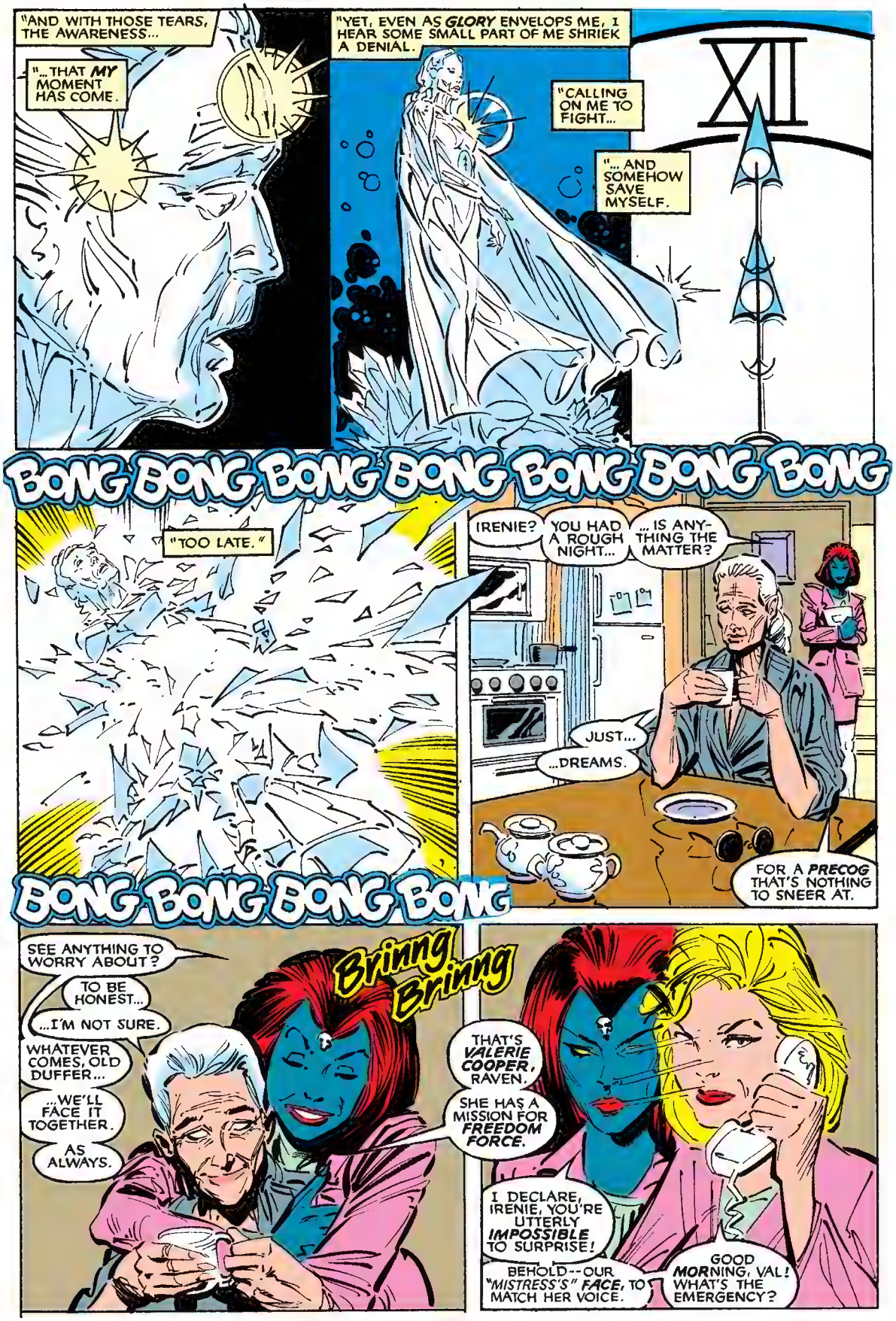

GOOD QUESTION, BIG BRUTE!
BUT WHO AM I TO REFUSE SUCH A GIFT?
SO LONG, SUNDER. IT'S BEEN REAL!

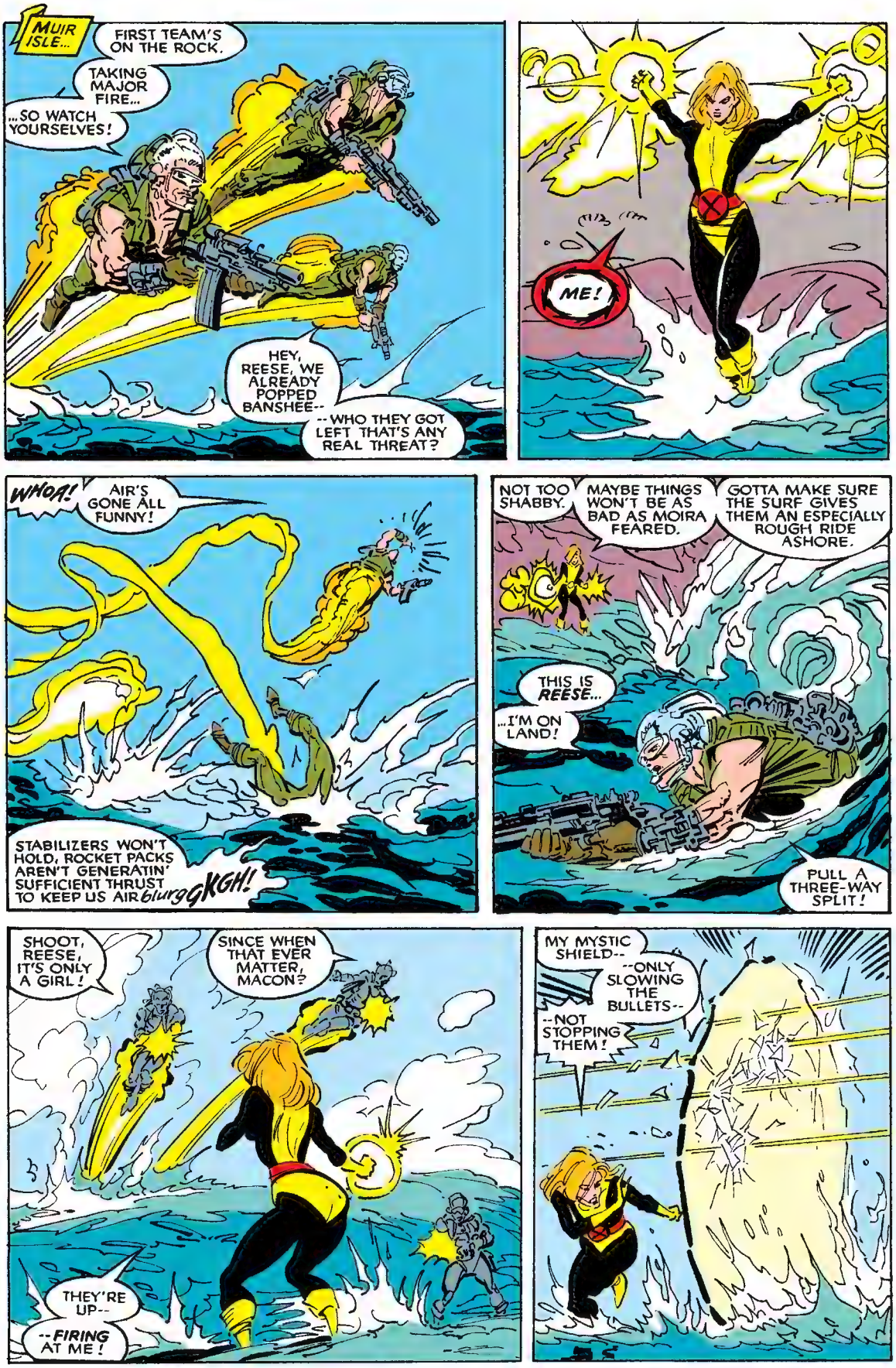
HANG ON, PAL! WE'LL PULL YOU OUTTA THERE!
YEAH. RIGHT. SURE.
ELEVEN YEARS A COP, NEVER HAD TO USE MY GUN.
NOW, I'M WILLIS, GIBSON AN' RAMBO ALL AT ONCE.
TOTALLY CRAZY!
BAM BAM BAM
THE BOY INJUN!
I GOTTA BULLET-PROOF SHIELD TO COVER ME, PAL. DON'T 'PEAR TO ME LIKE YOU'RE SO LUCKY!
BRAKKABRAK!
OUTRAGEOUS!
IMPACTS HURT-- I'LL HAVE BRUISES TO SPARE TOMORROW, I SHOULD LIVE SO LONG-- BUT THE ARMOR'S DOIN' ITS JOB. I'M STILL STANDING!
CHAKOW!
NICE SHOOTING, TOM!
WITHOUT THAT TRACK, BONEBREAKER'S IMMOBILIZED!
WHAT IS THIS?!
SHE'S POKIN' HOLES IN MY CHASSIS!
BETTER IT THAN YOU, BONE.
LATCHES ARE JAMMED, I CAN'T SPRING YOUR TORSO FROM ITS HARNESS.
GEE, ISN'T THAT TOO BAD.
CAN I LEND A HAND?
SHE'S PULLIN', PRETTY BOY--
--DON'T LET HER GET ME!
--WHO IS SHE, ANYWAY, SHE ISN'T ON THE BRIEFING SPECS--
I'M TRYING, BONE --BUT SHE'S A POWERHOUSE!

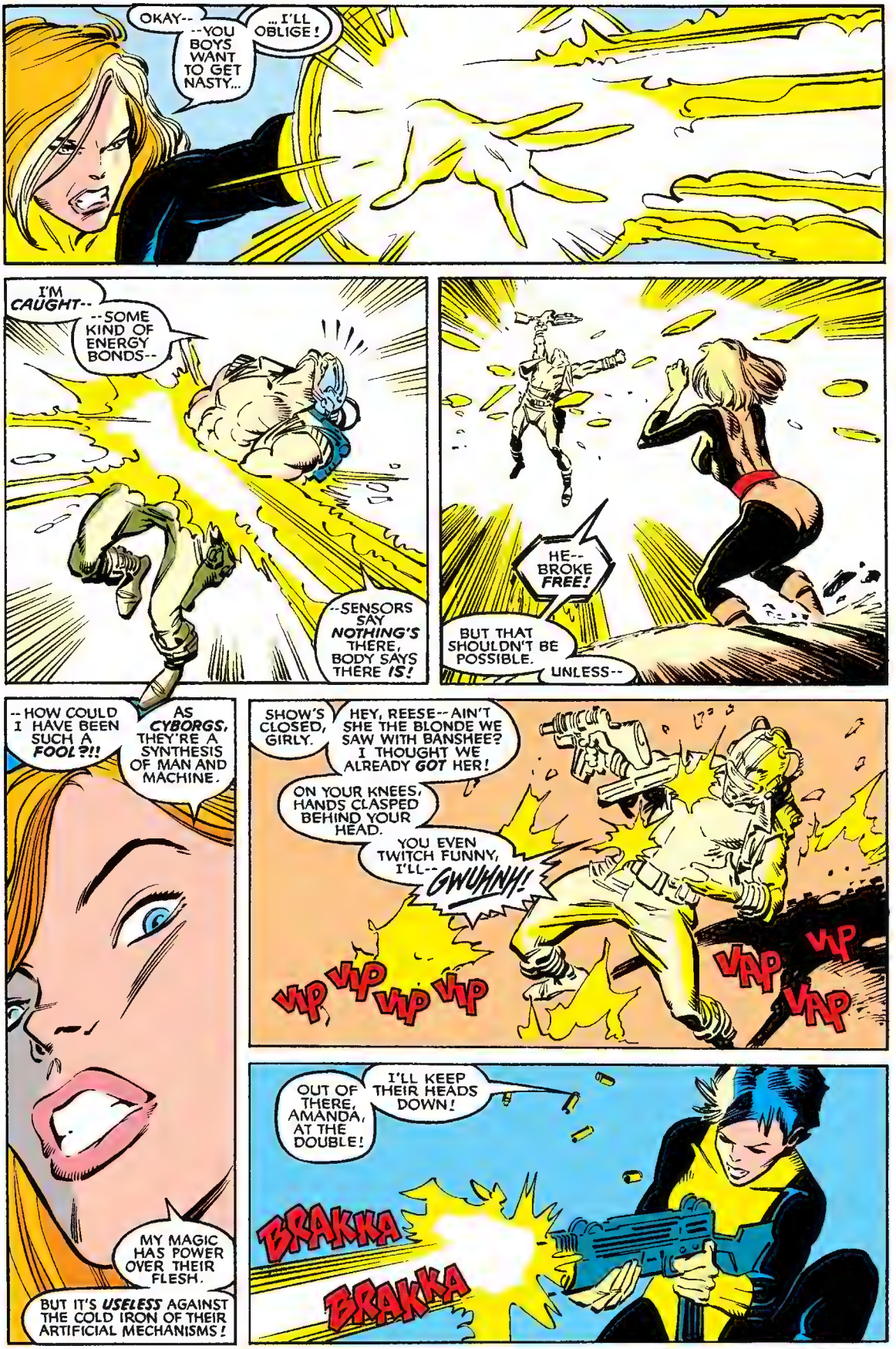

I'LL GUN 'ER!
STUPID SUIT WON'T SAVE HER FROM A HEAD SHOT.
STILL CAN'T HELP FLINCHING WHENEVER SOMEONE SHOOTS AT ME.
NO MORE USED TO MY NEW INVULNERABILITY THAN I AM TO MY STRENGTH.
BUT I CAN'T DENY IT'S A TOTAL TRIP!
PULL, BLAST YOU, PULL!
I AM, YOU LUMP!
HARD AS I'M ABLE!
BUT THEN...
SNAP!
HEY!
HA HA HA HA HA HA
WaiOWH!
OOOMPH
THUD
WHAP
CRASH
SO TELL ME, KID...
...WHAT'S SO FUNNY?
WHOSE SIDE YOU ON, ANYWAY?
KLATCH!
FIRE!
KID'S NOT JUST A TELE-KINETIC...
...HE'S A PYROTIC, TOO! I'M BURNIN'!
FWOOSH!
DANNY, YOU OKAY?
C'MON, LET'S CATCH UP WITH THE OTHERS.
WILL THEY ATTACK AGAIN? WILL THERE BE MORE FIGHTING?
I'FRAID SO.
GOOD. I CAN'T WAIT. THIS IS FUN.

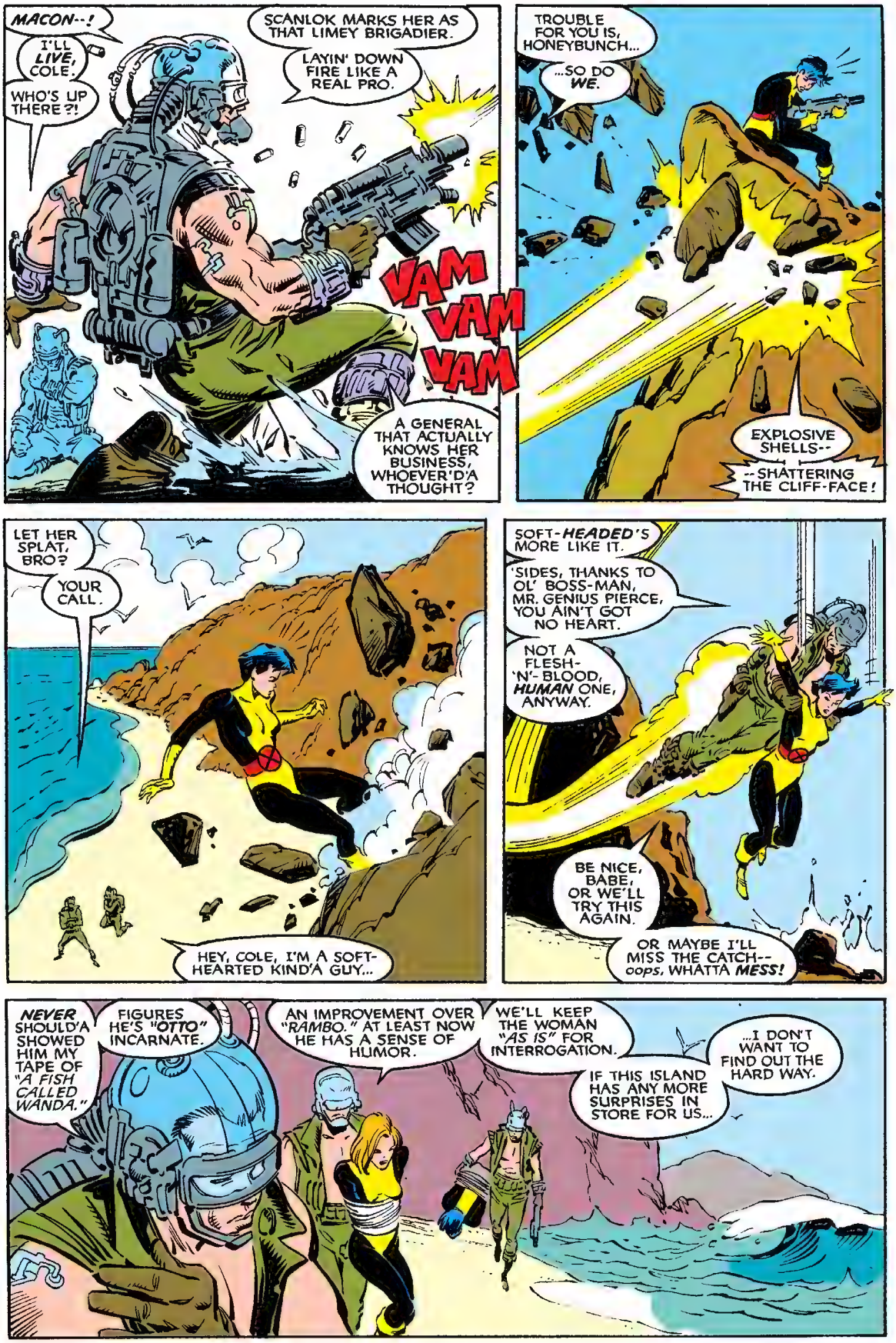

"TIME--
"--THE FRAME AND ARBITER OF OUR EXISTENCE.
"FOR ALL SAVE ME, PEOPLE'S PERCEPTIONS CONFINED TO THE EXPERIENCES OF THEIR OWN LIVES.
"SHORT LITTLE MAYFLY FLASHES OF LIGHT AGAINST THE BACKDROP OF INFINITY.
"PAST AND PRESENT HAVE REALITY...
"... BECAUSE WE'VE LIVED THROUGH THEM.
"THE FUTURE-- THAT GREAT UNKNOWN--
"--REMAINS BUT A DREAM.
"FOR ALL SAVE ME.
"I AM DESTINY.
ticktickticktickticktickticktickticktic
"I HAVE BEEN BLIND SINCE BIRTH, YET MY INNER SIGHT HAS SERVED ME AS WELL-- IF NOT BETTER-- THAN ANY EYES.
"IF ANYTHING, IT HAS GROWN KEENER WITH AGE AND USE.
"YET-- IN ALL I CAN REMEMBER, I HAVE NEVER FOUND MYSELF...
"... IN SUCH A PLACE AS THIS.
"A ROOM OF PUREST CRYSTAL.
ticktickticktickticktickticktickticktic
"EMBRACED BY CRYSTAL GARDENS BEYOND...
"... WHEREIN I FIND A STATUE OF...
RAVEN!
"RAVEN DARKHÖLME, THE NAME SHE CHOSE FOR HERSELF, JUST AS SHE DID THE CODE-IDENTITY, MYSTIQUE.
"SHE HAS NEVER LOOKED MORE LOVELY.
"THIS IS RAVEN AS I KNOW HER, THE SPIRIT-SOUL WITHIN MY DEAREST FRIEND-- FULL OF STRENGTH AND COURAGE AND PASSION-- THAT I HAVE LOVED FROM THE MOMENT WE MET.


"BUT SHE IS NOT ALONE HERE.
"EVERYWHERE I TURN, STATUES ABOUND.
"EACH EXEMPLIFYING THE NOBLEST, FINEST ASPECTS OF THE PERSON THEY REPRESENT.
"POSSESSING SUCH BEAUTY, THEY MAKE MY HEART ACHE.
tick tick tick tick tick tick tick tick tic
"THEN, I REALIZE...
"...THAT EVERYTHING AROUND ME IS CARVED FROM CRYSTAL.
"BIRDS, ANIMALS, INSECTS, FLOWERS, EVEN THE DISTANT MOUNTAINS AND THE GROUND BENEATH MY FEET--
"-- ALL FROZEN.
"IN A MOMENT OF SUBLIME, ABSOLUTE, TRANSCENDENT...
"...PERFECTION.
tick tick tick tick tick tick tick tick BONG
"OVERHEAD, A CRYSTAL MOON GLITTERS IN THE FIRMAMENT BESIDE A CRYSTAL SUN.
"AND SUDDENLY, I AM THE ONE 'OVERHEAD'...
"...WITH THE VAST PANOPLY OF THE MILKY WAY STREWN BEFORE ME.
"ALL THE STARS THAT EVER WERE...
"...THE BEINGS THAT LIVE ON THEIR ATTENDANT WORLDS...
"...NO MORE.
"I WEEP.
"WITHOUT KNOWING WHETHER FROM GRIEF AT WHAT'S BEEN LOST...
"...OR JOY AT THE INDESCRIBABLE GLORY THAT REMAINS.

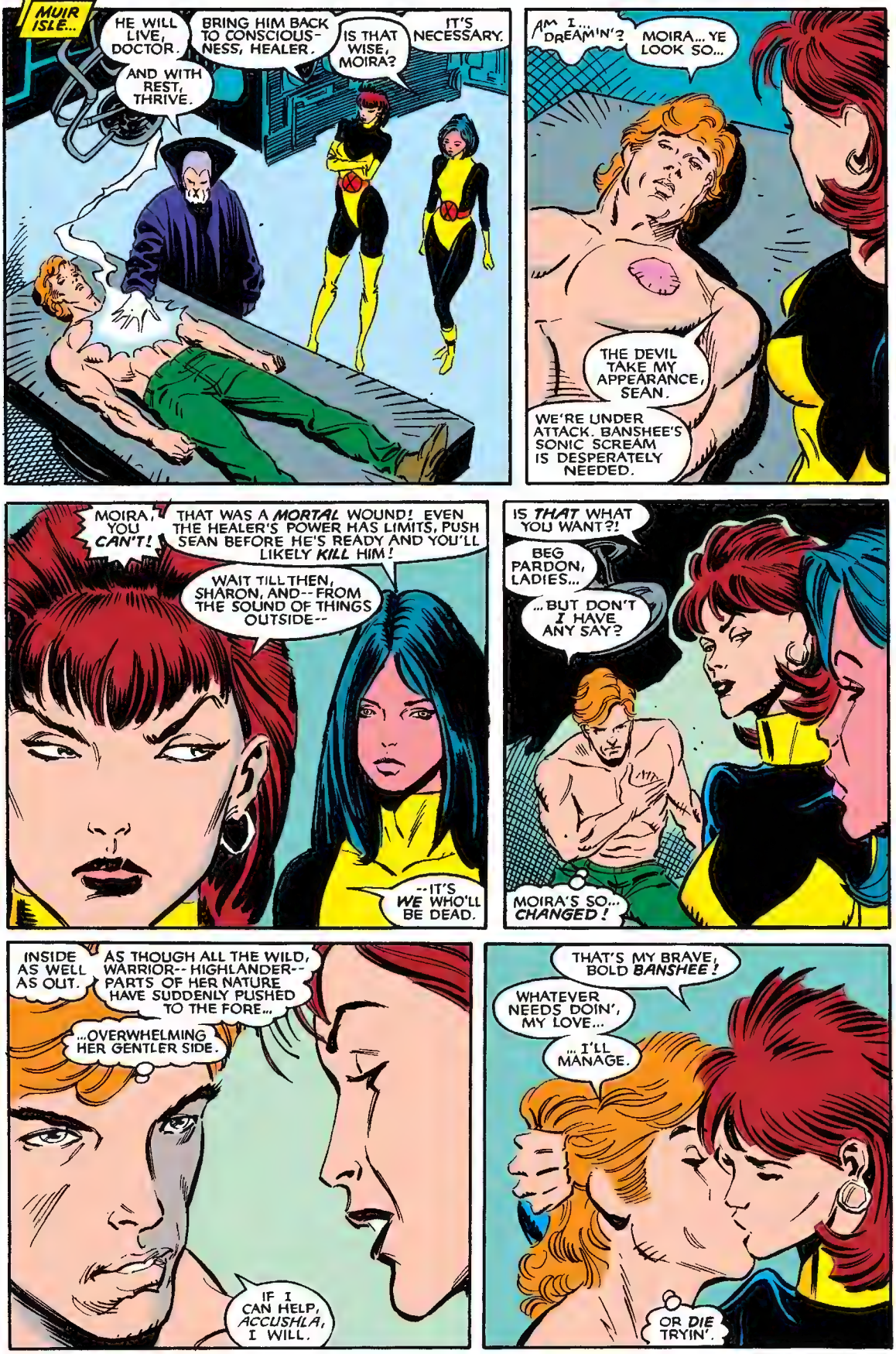

"AND WITH THOSE TEARS, THE AWARENESS...
"...THAT MY MOMENT HAS COME.
"YET, EVEN AS GLORY ENVELOPS ME, I HEAR SOME SMALL PART OF ME SHRIEK A DENIAL.
"CALLING ON ME TO FIGHT...
"...AND SOMEHOW SAVE MYSELF.
XII
BONG BONG BONG BONG BONG BONG BONG
"TOO LATE."
IRENIE?
YOU HAD A ROUGH NIGHT...
...IS ANY-THING THE MATTER?
JUST...
...DREAMS.
FOR A PRECOG THAT'S NOTHING TO SNEER AT.
BONG BONG BONG BONG
SEE ANYTHING TO WORRY ABOUT?
TO BE HONEST...
...I'M NOT SURE.
WHATEVER COMES, OLD DUFFER...
...WE'LL FACE IT TOGETHER.
AS ALWAYS.
Brinng Brinng
THAT'S VALERIE COOPER, RAVEN.
SHE HAS A MISSION FOR FREEDOM FORCE.
I DECLARE, IRENIE, YOU'RE UTTERLY IMPOSSIBLE TO SURPRISE!
BEHOLD--OUR "MISTRESS'S" FACE, TO MATCH HER VOICE.
GOOD MORNING, VAL! WHAT'S THE EMERGENCY?

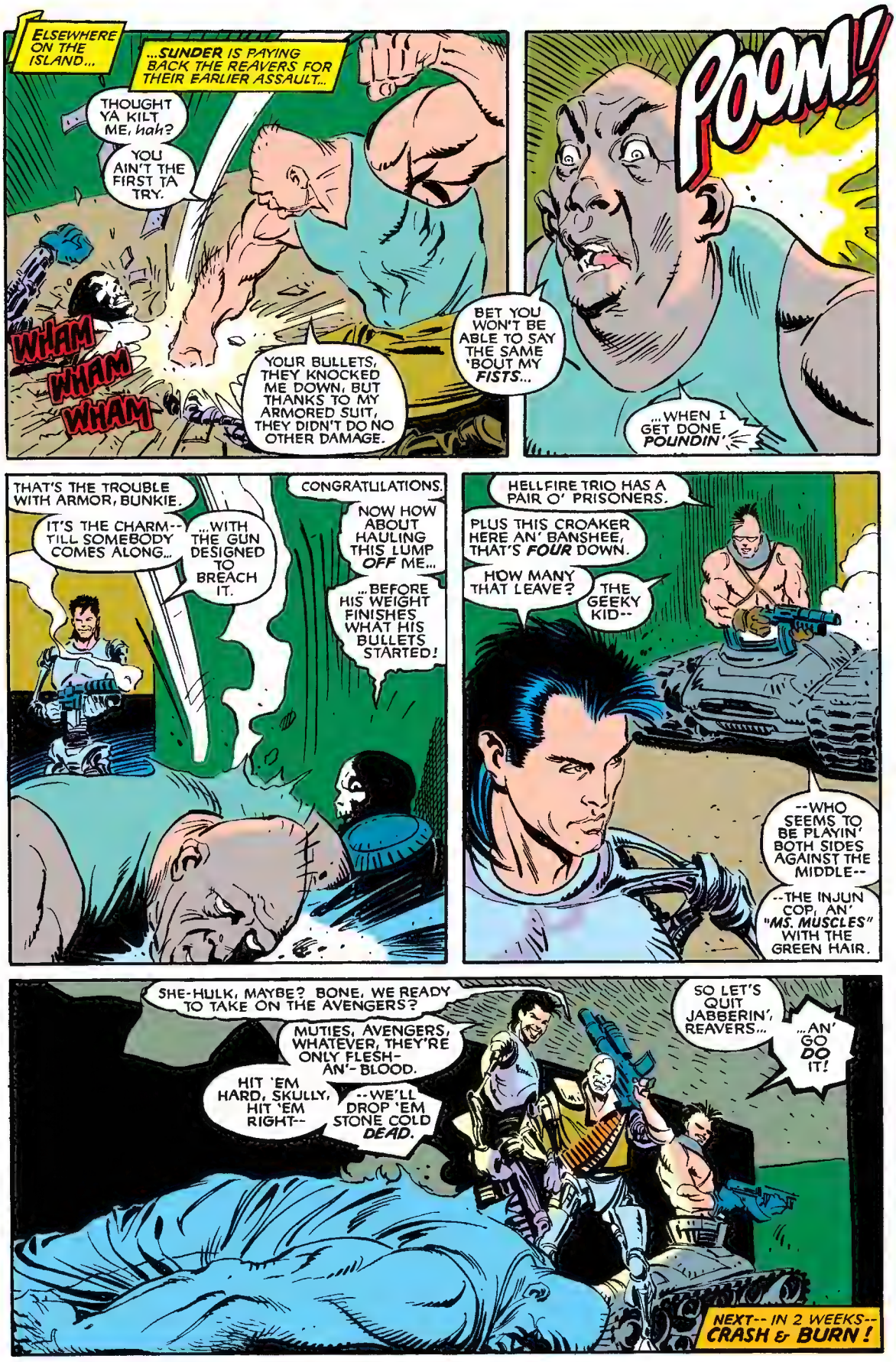

MUIR ISLE...
FIRST TEAM'S ON THE ROCK.
TAKING MAJOR FIRE...
...SO WATCH YOURSELVES!
HEY, REESE, WE ALREADY POPPED BANSHEE--
--WHO THEY GOT LEFT THAT'S ANY REAL THREAT?
ME!
WHOA!
AIR'S GONE ALL FUNNY!
STABILIZERS WON'T HOLD, ROCKET PACKS AREN'T GENERATIN' SUFFICIENT THRUST TO KEEP US AIR
blurrg
GKGH!
NOT TOO SHABBY.
MAYBE THINGS WON'T BE AS BAD AS MOIRA FEARED.
GOTTA MAKE SURE THE SURF GIVES THEM AN ESPECIALLY ROUGH RIDE ASHORE.
THIS IS REESE...
...I'M ON LAND!
PULL A THREE-WAY SPLIT!
SHOOT, REESE, IT'S ONLY A GIRL!
SINCE WHEN THAT EVER MATTER, MACON?
THEY'RE UP--
--FIRING AT ME!
MY MYSTIC SHIELD--
--ONLY SLOWING THE BULLETS--
--NOT STOPPING THEM!


OKAY--
--YOU BOYS WANT TO GET NASTY...
...I'LL OBLIGE!
I'M CAUGHT--
--SOME KIND OF ENERGY BONDS--
--SENSORS SAY NOTHING'S THERE, BODY SAYS THERE IS!
HE--BROKE FREE!
BUT THAT SHOULDN'T BE POSSIBLE.
UNLESS--
--HOW COULD I HAVE BEEN SUCH A FOOL?!!
AS CYBORGS, THEY'RE A SYNTHESIS OF MAN AND MACHINE.
MY MAGIC HAS POWER OVER THEIR FLESH.
BUT IT'S USELESS AGAINST THE COLD IRON OF THEIR ARTIFICIAL MECHANISMS!
SHOW'S CLOSED, GIRLY.
HEY, REESE--AIN'T SHE THE BLONDE WE SAW WITH BANSHEE? I THOUGHT WE ALREADY GOT HER!
ON YOUR KNEES, HANDS CLASPED BEHIND YOUR HEAD.
YOU EVEN TWITCH FUNNY, I'LL--
GWUHNH!
VIP VIP VIP VIP
VAP VAP VAP
OUT OF THERE, AMANDA, AT THE DOUBLE!
I'LL KEEP THEIR HEADS DOWN!
BRAKKA
BRAKKA


MACON--!
I'LL LIVE, COLE.
WHO'S UP THERE?!
SCANLOK MARKS HER AS THAT LIMEY BRIGADIER.
LAYIN' DOWN FIRE LIKE A REAL PRO.
VAM VAM VAM
A GENERAL THAT ACTUALLY KNOWS HER BUSINESS, WHOEVER'D'A THOUGHT?
TROUBLE FOR YOU IS, HONEYBUNCH...
...SO DO WE.
EXPLOSIVE SHELLS--
--SHATTERING THE CLIFF-FACE!
LET HER SPLAT, BRO?
YOUR CALL.
HEY, COLE, I'M A SOFT-HEARTED KIND'A GUY...
SOFT-HEADED'S MORE LIKE IT.
'SIDES, THANKS TO OL' BOSS-MAN, MR. GENIUS PIERCE, YOU AIN'T GOT NO HEART.
NOT A FLESH-'N'-BLOOD, HUMAN ONE, ANYWAY.
BE NICE, BABE, OR WE'LL TRY THIS AGAIN.
OR MAYBE I'LL MISS THE CATCH-- oops, WHATTA MESS!
NEVER SHOULD'A SHOWED HIM MY TAPE OF "A FISH CALLED WANDA."
FIGURES HE'S "OTTO" INCARNATE.
AN IMPROVEMENT OVER "RAMBO." AT LEAST NOW HE HAS A SENSE OF HUMOR.
WE'LL KEEP THE WOMAN "AS IS" FOR INTERROGATION.
IF THIS ISLAND HAS ANY MORE SURPRISES IN STORE FOR US...
...I DON'T WANT TO FIND OUT THE HARD WAY.

THE WASHINGTON, DC, HEADQUARTERS OF FREEDOM FORCE-- THE UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT'S ENHANCED POWER COVERT ACTION TEAM...
NO!
I WON'T LIFT A FINGER TO HELP THAT MURDERING SWINE!
CONSIDERING YOUR OWN HISTORY, MYSTIQUE, AS FORMER HEAD OF THE TERRORIST BROTHERHOOD OF EVIL MUTANTS...
...YOU'RE HARDLY IN A POSITION TO THROW STONES.
MOIRA MacTAGGART'S RESEARCH CENTER IS UNDER ATTACK...
WHAT'S THAT TO ME? LET XAVIER'S MUTANTS TAKE CARE OF THEIR OWN!
THIS IS A HEAVEN-SENT OPPORTUNITY FOR FREEDOM FORCE TO ESTABLISH SOME SERIOUS CREDIBILITY AMONG THE MUTANT COMMUNITY...
...BY GOING TO THE RESCUE OF PEOPLE WHO USED TO BE YOUR BITTER FOES.
YOU CAN'T AFFORD TO PASS THAT UP.
I SUPPOSE THIS HAS ABSOLUTELY NOTHING TO DO...
...WITH WANTING FORGE HERE BACK DESIGNING WEAPONS FOR "UNCLE SAM."
WOULD IT HURT TO GET ON HIS GOOD SIDE, TOO?
BECAUSE OF HIM, COOPER, MY FOSTER DAUGHTER ROGUE--
--NOT TO MENTION ALL HER FELLOW X-MEN--WERE KILLED.
AND YOU EXPECT ME TO WORK WITH HIM?
I EXPECT YOU, MYSTIQUE, TO DO AS YOU'RE TOLD.
DID I DO THE RIGHT THING, DESTINY, BY GIVING IN?
YOU DID THE ONLY THING YOU COULD, FOR THE GOOD OF ALL.
HARDLY A COMFORTING THOUGHT.
AFTER ALL THESE MONTHS, HOW I STILL HATE THE MAN.
WITH THE ENHANCEMENTS I'VE ADDED TO THE FREEDOM FORCE JET...
...WE CAN BE THERE IN NO TIME.
YOU SHOULD THINK MORE KINDLY TOWARDS FORGE, MYSTIQUE...
... CONSIDERING HOW... INTIMATELY... YOUR FUTURES ARE INTER-TWINED.
THAT'LL BE THE DAY.
PERHAPS.
AND FAR SOONER, MY DEAR, THAN YOU DARE SUSPECT.


MUIR ISLE...
HE WILL LIVE, DOCTOR.
AND WITH REST, THRIVE.
BRING HIM BACK TO CONSCIOUSNESS, HEALER.
IS THAT WISE, MOIRA?
IT'S NECESSARY.
AM I... DREAMIN'?
MOIRA... YE LOOK SO...
THE DEVIL TAKE MY APPEARANCE, SEAN.
WE'RE UNDER ATTACK. BANSHEE'S SONIC SCREAM IS DESPERATELY NEEDED.
MOIRA, YOU CAN'T!
THAT WAS A MORTAL WOUND! EVEN THE HEALER'S POWER HAS LIMITS, PUSH SEAN BEFORE HE'S READY AND YOU'LL LIKELY KILL HIM!
WAIT TILL THEN, SHARON, AND--FROM THE SOUND OF THINGS OUTSIDE--
--IT'S WE WHO'LL BE DEAD.
IS THAT WHAT YOU WANT?!
BEG PARDON, LADIES...
...BUT DON'T I HAVE ANY SAY?
MOIRA'S SO... CHANGED!
INSIDE AS WELL AS OUT.
AS THOUGH ALL THE WILD, WARRIOR--HIGHLANDER--PARTS OF HER NATURE HAVE SUDDENLY PUSHED TO THE FORE...
...OVERWHELMING HER GENTLER SIDE.
IF I CAN HELP, ACCUSHLA, I WILL.
THAT'S MY BRAVE, BOLD BANSHEE!
WHATEVER NEEDS DOIN', MY LOVE...
...I'LL MANAGE.
OR DIE TRYIN'.


ELSEWHERE ON THE ISLAND...
...SUNDER IS PAYING BACK THE REAVERS FOR THEIR EARLIER ASSAULT...
THOUGHT YA KILT ME, hah?
YOU AIN'T THE FIRST TA TRY.
WHAM WHAM WHAM
YOUR BULLETS, THEY KNOCKED ME DOWN, BUT THANKS TO MY ARMORED SUIT, THEY DIDN'T DO NO OTHER DAMAGE.
BET YOU WON'T BE ABLE TO SAY THE SAME 'BOUT MY FISTS...
POOM!
...WHEN I GET DONE POUNDIN'.
THAT'S THE TROUBLE WITH ARMOR, BUNKIE.
IT'S THE CHARM-- TILL SOMEBODY COMES ALONG...
...WITH THE GUN DESIGNED TO BREACH IT.
CONGRATULATIONS.
NOW HOW ABOUT HAULING THIS LUMP OFF ME...
...BEFORE HIS WEIGHT FINISHES WHAT HIS BULLETS STARTED!
HELLFIRE TRIO HAS A PAIR O' PRISONERS.
PLUS THIS CROAKER HERE AN' BANSHEE, THAT'S FOUR DOWN.
HOW MANY THAT LEAVE?
THE GEEKY KID--
--WHO SEEMS TO BE PLAYIN' BOTH SIDES AGAINST THE MIDDLE--
--THE INJUN COP, AN' "MS. MUSCLES" WITH THE GREEN HAIR.
SHE-HULK, MAYBE? BONE, WE READY TO TAKE ON THE AVENGERS?
MUTIES, AVENGERS, WHATEVER, THEY'RE ONLY FLESH-AN'-BLOOD.
HIT 'EM HARD, SKULLY, HIT 'EM RIGHT--
--WE'LL DROP 'EM STONE COLD DEAD.
SO LET'S QUIT JABBERIN', REAVERS...
...AN' GO DO IT!
NEXT-- IN 2 WEEKS-- CRASH & BURN!

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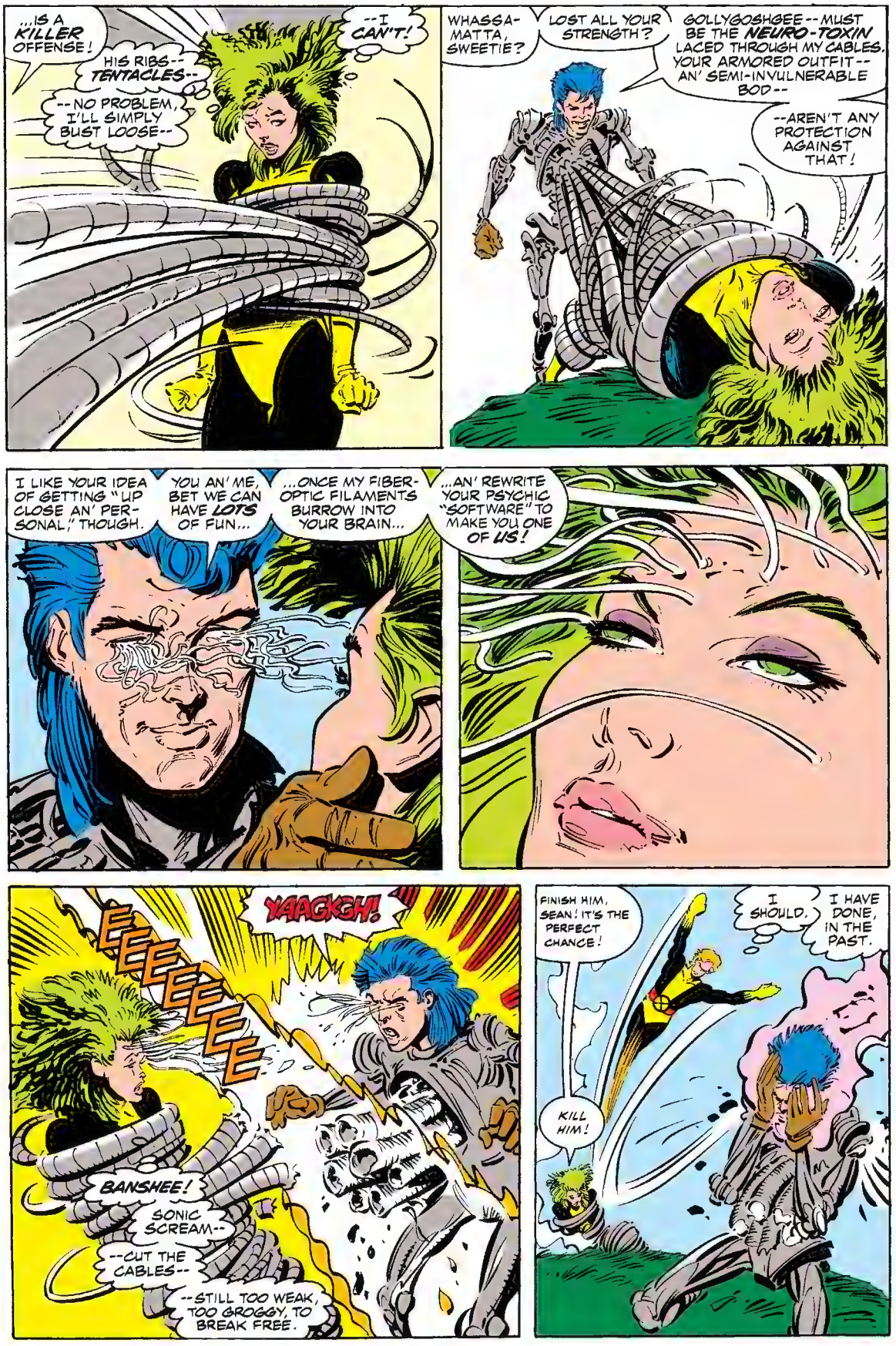
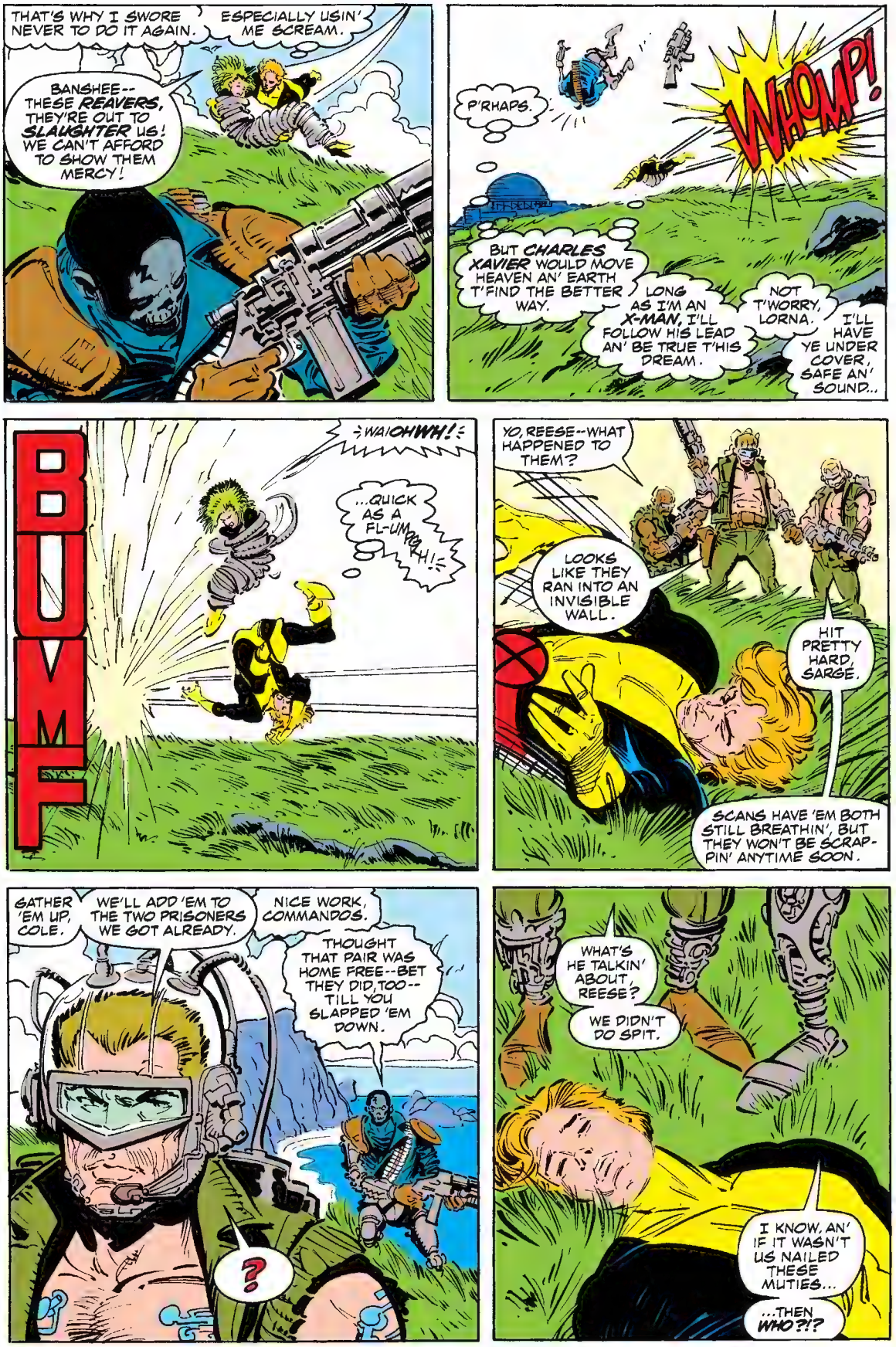
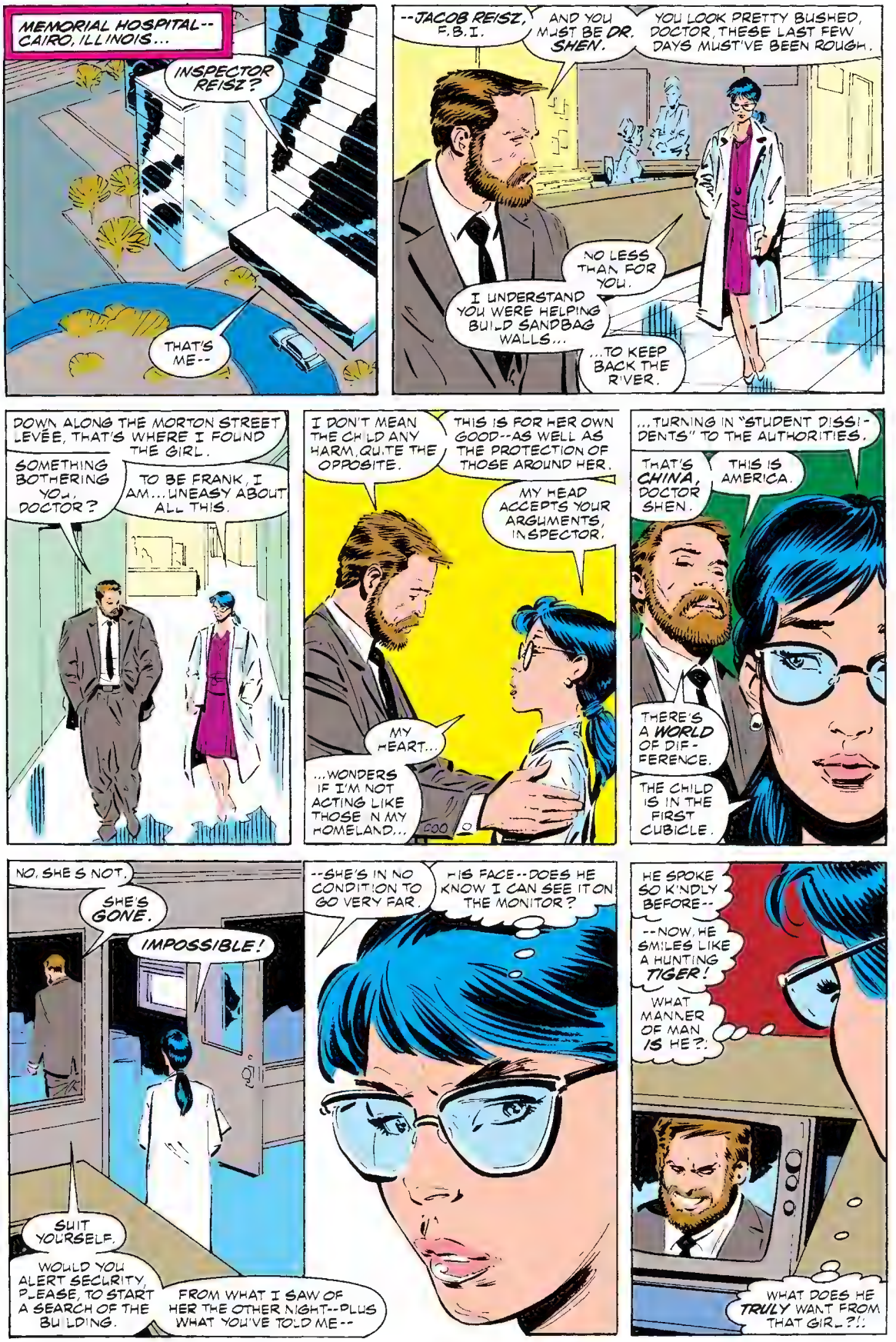
STAN LEE PRESENTS
CRASH & BURN
MUIR ISLE--CURRENTLY UNDER ATTACK BY THE CYBORG REAVERS, WHO'VE SWORN TO KILL EVERY MUTANT THEY FIND...
...ONLY TO DISCOVER THAT A TRIFLE EASIER SAID THAN DONE.
EEEEEEEEEE
M-MY SYSTEMS--!
MY EARS!
WHA'S HAPP'NIN'?!
WHO'S DOIN' THIS?!!
BANSHEE!
BUT--AIN'T HE S'POSED TA BE CRIPPLED?!
STARRING THE UNCANNY X-MEN
CHRIS CLAREMONT WRITER
MARC SILVESTRI & DAN GREEN ARTISTS
MICHAEL HEISLER LETTERER
GLYNIS OLIVER COLORIST
BOB HARRAS EDITOR
TOM DEFALCO EDITOR IN CHIEF

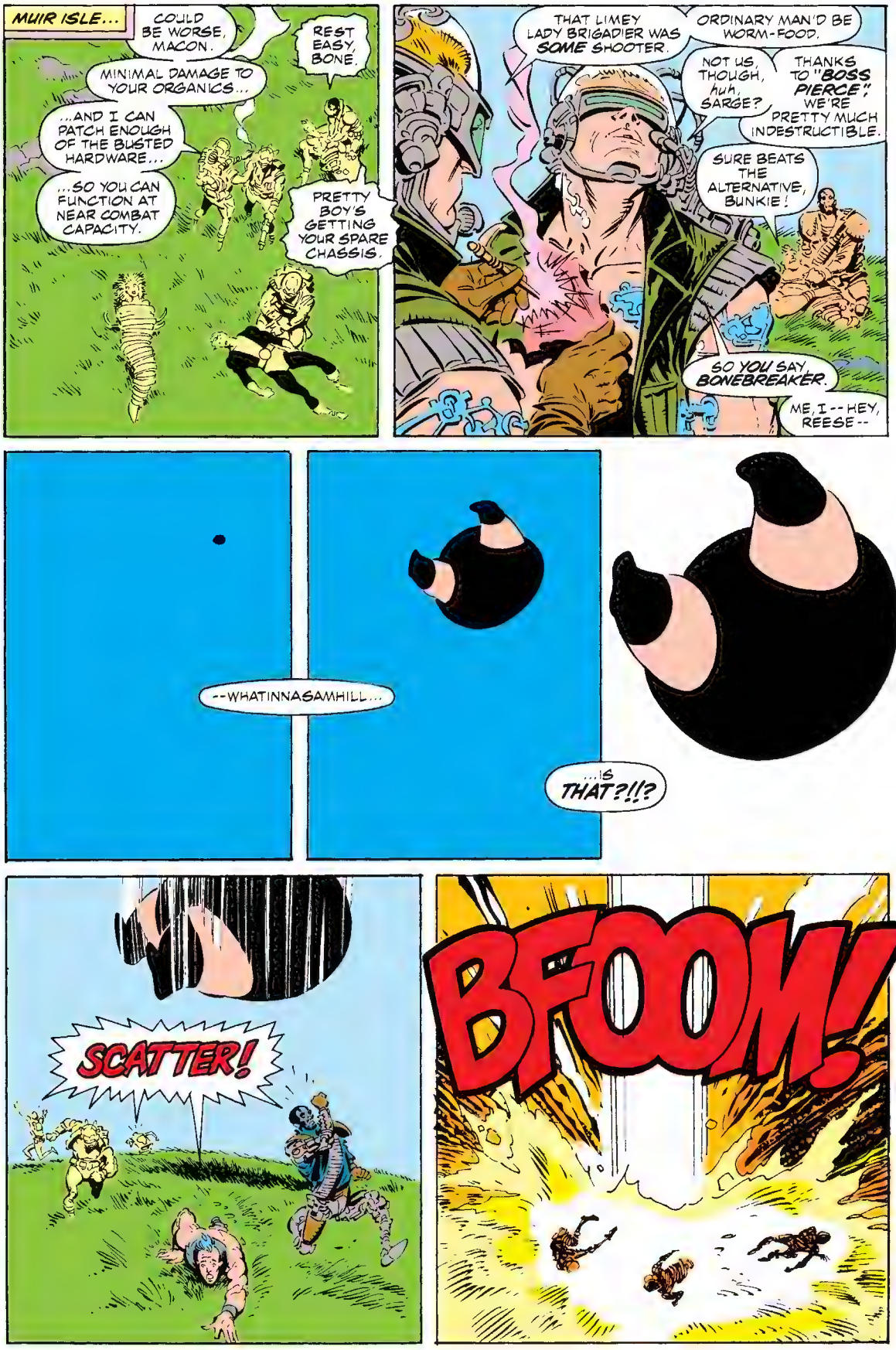
THAT I WAS, BOYO, AN' RETIRED, T'BOOT.
BUT--THANKS T'THE MORLOCK HEALER, I GOT BETTER.
EEEEEEEEEE
AN' THANKS T' YOU LOT...
...SEAN CASSIDY'S BACK ON ACTIVE SERVICE.
FLYBOY THINKS HE'S PRETTY HOT STUFF.
SOON AS I PUMP THIS LITTLE BEAUTY UP HIS TAIL...
...HE'LL BE SCREAMIN'...
...INNA KEY OF AGONEEE!
HOWEVER...
ULTRA-LOW FREQUENCY SONICS--
--SHOCK WAVES... PURE MURDER--
--LIKE BEIN' BEAT ALL OVER BY A SLEDGE-HAMMER--
THRUMM!
--HE'S JUST A GUY, FER CRYIN' OUT LOUD! HOW CAN HE MAKE THIS KIND'A NOISE?!?
SHAKIN' MY POWER CHASSIS APART AT THE SEAMS--
--AHWW, CRIPES, MY MISSILE!
SKAKAM!
THAT'S YOUR TROUBLE, BONE.
ALWAYS DEPENDENT ON TOO MUCH HIGH-TECH.
YOU WANT THE JOB DONE, BEST TRY THE OLD-FASHIONED WAY...
...AN' GUN THAT SUCKER OUTTA THE AIR!
INTERESTING CONCEPT, SKULL-BUSTER...

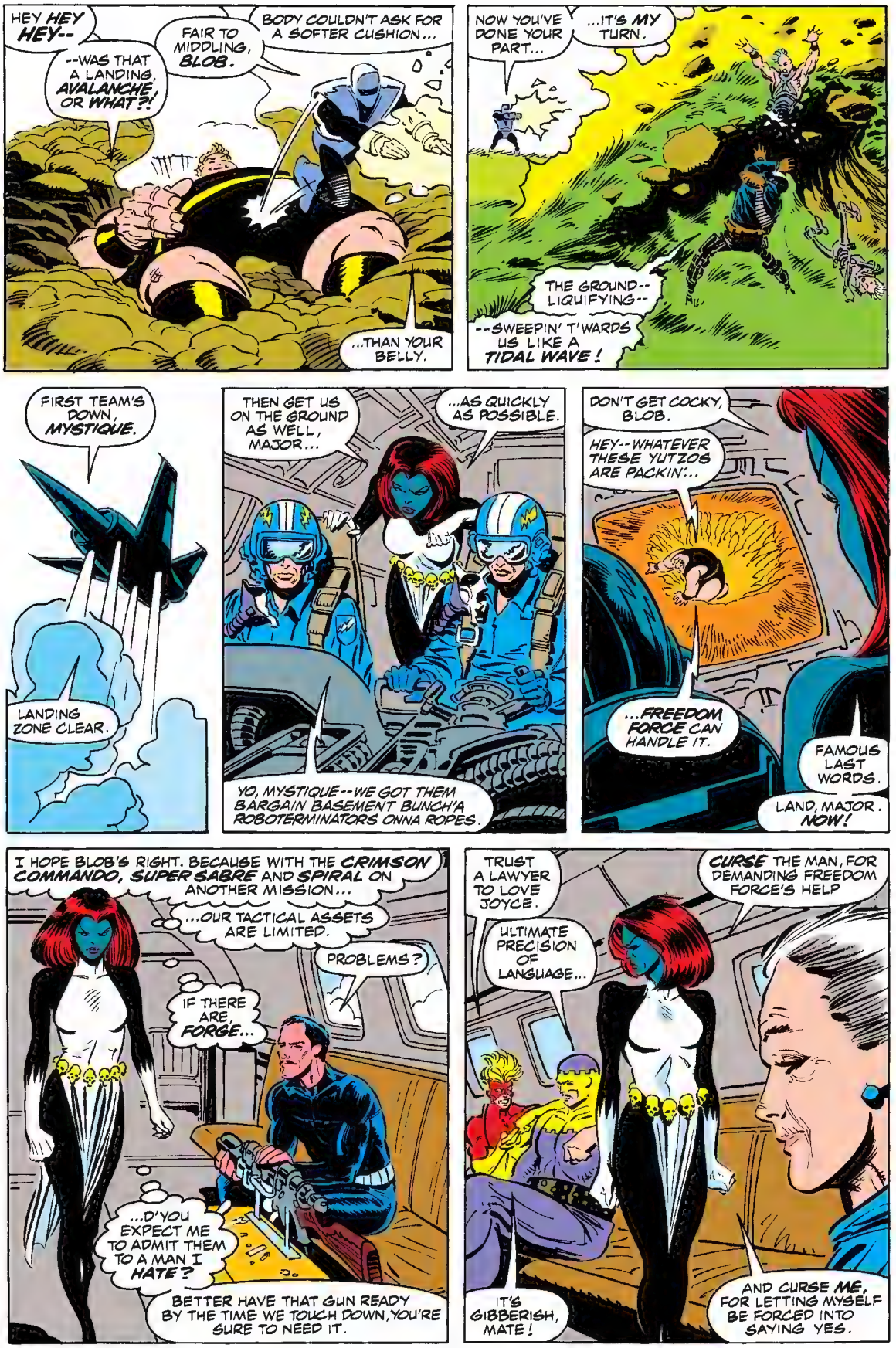
...COMING FROM SOMEONE WHO'S MORE MACHINE THAN MAN.
GLURGLKX!
BUT ME, BEING ALL FLESH-AND-BLOOD...
...I FAVOR THE ULTIMATE IN LOW-TECH.
A GOOD, OLD-FASHIONED PUNCH TO THE NOSE.
SAY "HELLO" TO THE 21ST CENTURY, REAVER.
I DUNNO WHO YOU ARE, HONEY-BUNCH...
?!?
HAH!
...BUT THAT IS NO WAY FOR A LADY TO BEHAVE.
FIRSTLY, PAL, I'M NO MORE A LADY THAN YOU ARE A GENTLEMAN.
SECONDLY, MY NAME'S LORNA DANE.
AS POLARIS, I'D HAVE USED MY MAGNETIC POWERS TO TAKE YOU CYBORGS APART B'IT BY METAL BIT.
POW!
BUT Y'KNOW, I'M KIND'A GLAD I CAN'T DO THAT ANYMORE.
'CAUSE THAT MEANS I GET TO DEAL WITH YOU UP CLOSE AND PERSONAL...
...WITH MY BARE HANDS!
OOOOO, THREATS!
I LOVE THREATS.
BUT I GOTTA TELL YA, TO PRETTY BOY, THE BEST DEFENSE...

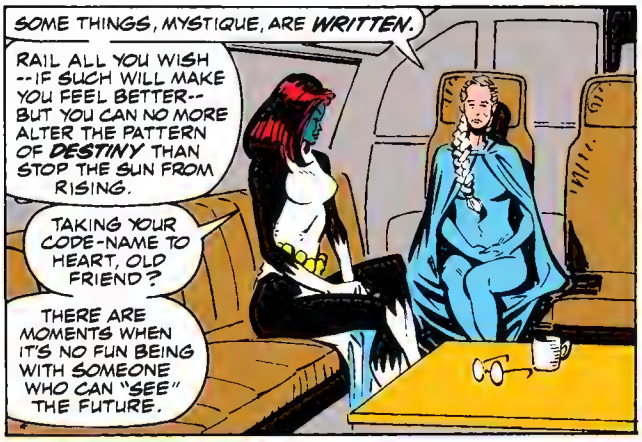

...IS A KILLER OFFENSE!
HIS RIBS-- TENTACLES--
--NO PROBLEM, I'LL SIMPLY BUST LOOSE--
--I CAN'T!
WHASSA-MATTA, SWEETIE?
LOST ALL YOUR STRENGTH?
GOLLYGOSHGEE--MUST BE THE NEURO-TOXIN LACED THROUGH MY CABLES, YOUR ARMORED OUTFIT--AN' SEMI-INVULNERABLE BOD--
--AREN'T ANY PROTECTION AGAINST THAT!
I LIKE YOUR IDEA OF GETTING "UP CLOSE AN' PERSONAL," THOUGH.
YOU AN' ME, BET WE CAN HAVE LOTS OF FUN...
...ONCE MY FIBER-OPTIC FILAMENTS BURROW INTO YOUR BRAIN...
...AN' REWRITE YOUR PSYCHIC "SOFTWARE" TO MAKE YOU ONE OF US!
EEEEEEEEE
YAAGKGH!
BANSHEE!
SONIC SCREAM--
--CUT THE CABLES--
--STILL TOO WEAK, TOO GROGGY, TO BREAK FREE.
FINISH HIM, SEAN! IT'S THE PERFECT CHANCE!
I SHOULD.
I HAVE DONE, IN THE PAST.
KILL HIM!


THAT'S WHY I SWORE NEVER TO DO IT AGAIN.
ESPECIALLY USIN' ME SCREAM.
BANSHEE--THESE REAVERS, THEY'RE OUT TO SLAUGHTER US! WE CAN'T AFFORD TO SHOW THEM MERCY!
P'RHAPS.
WHOMP!
BUT CHARLES XAVIER WOULD MOVE HEAVEN AN' EARTH T'FIND THE BETTER WAY.
LONG AS I'M AN X-MAN, I'LL FOLLOW HIS LEAD AN' BE TRUE T'HIS DREAM.
NOT T'WORRY, LORNA. I'LL HAVE YE UNDER COVER, SAFE AN' SOUND...
BUMF
÷WAIOHWH!÷
...QUICK AS A FL-UMPH!÷
YO, REESE--WHAT HAPPENED TO THEM?
LOOKS LIKE THEY RAN INTO AN INVISIBLE WALL.
HIT PRETTY HARD, SARGE.
SCANS HAVE 'EM BOTH STILL BREATHIN', BUT THEY WON'T BE SCRAPPIN' ANYTIME SOON.
GATHER 'EM UP, COLE.
WE'LL ADD 'EM TO THE TWO PRISONERS WE GOT ALREADY.
NICE WORK, COMMANDOS.
THOUGHT THAT PAIR WAS HOME FREE--BET THEY DID,TOO--TILL YOU SLAPPED 'EM DOWN.
?
WHAT'S HE TALKIN' ABOUT, REESE?
WE DIDN'T DO SPIT.
I KNOW, AN' IF IT WASN'T US NAILED THESE MUTIES...
...THEN WHO?!?


MEMORIAL HOSPITAL--CAIRO, ILLINOIS...
INSPECTOR REISZ?
THAT'S ME--
--JACOB REISZ, F.B.I.
AND YOU MUST BE DR. SHEN.
YOU LOOK PRETTY BUSHED, DOCTOR. THESE LAST FEW DAYS MUST'VE BEEN ROUGH.
NO LESS THAN FOR YOU.
I UNDERSTAND YOU WERE HELPING BUILD SANDBAG WALLS...
...TO KEEP BACK THE RIVER.
DOWN ALONG THE MORTON STREET LEVEE, THAT'S WHERE I FOUND THE GIRL.
SOMETHING BOTHERING YOU, DOCTOR?
TO BE FRANK, I AM...UNEASY ABOUT ALL THIS.
I DON'T MEAN THE CHILD ANY HARM, QUITE THE OPPOSITE.
THIS IS FOR HER OWN GOOD--AS WELL AS THE PROTECTION OF THOSE AROUND HER.
MY HEAD ACCEPTS YOUR ARGUMENTS, INSPECTOR.
MY HEART...
...WONDERS IF I'M NOT ACTING LIKE THOSE IN MY HOMELAND...
...TURNING IN "STUDENT DISSIDENTS" TO THE AUTHORITIES.
THAT'S CHINA, DOCTOR SHEN.
THIS IS AMERICA.
THERE'S A WORLD OF DIFFERENCE.
THE CHILD IS IN THE FIRST CUBICLE.
NO. SHE'S NOT.
SHE'S GONE.
IMPOSSIBLE!
SUIT YOURSELF.
WOULD YOU ALERT SECURITY, PLEASE, TO START A SEARCH OF THE BUILDING.
FROM WHAT I SAW OF HER THE OTHER NIGHT--PLUS WHAT YOU'VE TOLD ME--
--SHE'S IN NO CONDITION TO GO VERY FAR.
HIS FACE--DOES HE KNOW I CAN SEE IT ON THE MONITOR?
HE SPOKE SO K'NDLY BEFORE--
--NOW, HE SMILES LIKE A HUNTING TIGER!
WHAT MANNER OF MAN IS HE?
WHAT DOES HE TRULY WANT FROM THAT GIRL?!

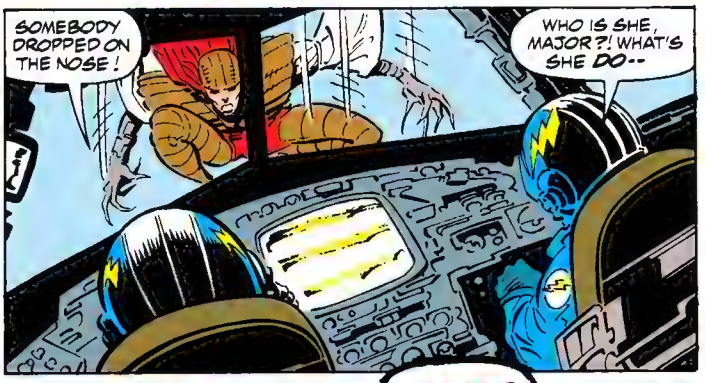

MUIR ISLE...
COULD BE WORSE, MACON.
REST EASY, BONE.
MINIMAL DAMAGE TO YOUR ORGANICS...
...AND I CAN PATCH ENOUGH OF THE BUSTED HARDWARE...
...SO YOU CAN FUNCTION AT NEAR COMBAT CAPACITY.
PRETTY BOY'S GETTING YOUR SPARE CHASSIS.
THAT LIMEY LADY BRIGADIER WAS SOME SHOOTER.
ORDINARY MAN'D BE WORM-FOOD.
NOT US, THOUGH, huh, SARGE?
THANKS TO "BOSS PIERCE", WE'RE PRETTY MUCH INDESTRUCTIBLE.
SURE BEATS THE ALTERNATIVE, BUNKIE!
SO YOU SAY, BONEBREAKER.
ME, I -- HEY, REESE --
--WHATINNASAMHILL...
...IS THAT?!!?
SCATTER!
BFOOM!

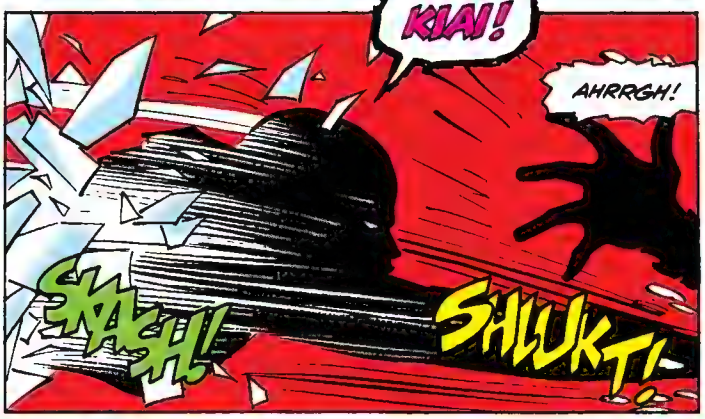

HEY HEY HEY--
--WAS THAT A LANDING, AVALANCHE, OR WHAT?!
FAIR TO MIDDLING, BLOB.
BODY COULDN'T ASK FOR A SOFTER CUSHION...
...THAN YOUR BELLY.
NOW YOU'VE DONE YOUR PART...
...IT'S MY TURN.
THE GROUND-- LIQUIFYING--
--SWEEPIN' T'WARDS US LIKE A TIDAL WAVE!
FIRST TEAM'S DOWN, MYSTIQUE.
LANDING ZONE CLEAR.
THEN GET US ON THE GROUND AS WELL, MAJOR...
...AS QUICKLY AS POSSIBLE.
YO, MYSTIQUE--WE GOT THEM BARGAIN BASEMENT BUNCH'A ROBOTERMINATORS ONNA ROPES.
DON'T GET COCKY, BLOB.
HEY--WHATEVER THESE YUTZOS ARE PACKIN'...
...FREEDOM FORCE CAN HANDLE IT.
FAMOUS LAST WORDS.
LAND, MAJOR. NOW!
I HOPE BLOB'S RIGHT. BECAUSE WITH THE CRIMSON COMMANDO, SUPER SABRE AND SPIRAL ON ANOTHER MISSION...
...OUR TACTICAL ASSETS ARE LIMITED.
PROBLEMS?
IF THERE ARE, FORGE...
...D'YOU EXPECT ME TO ADMIT THEM TO A MAN I HATE?
BETTER HAVE THAT GUN READY BY THE TIME WE TOUCH DOWN, YOU'RE SURE TO NEED IT.
TRUST A LAWYER TO LOVE JOYCE.
ULTIMATE PRECISION OF LANGUAGE...
IT'S GIBBERISH, MATE!
CURSE THE MAN, FOR DEMANDING FREEDOM FORCE'S HELP
AND CURSE ME, FOR LETTING MYSELF BE FORCED INTO SAYING YES.

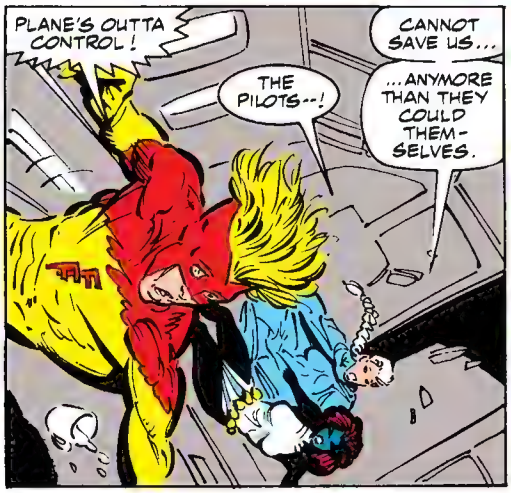

SOME THINGS, MYSTIQUE, ARE WRITTEN.
RAIL ALL YOU WISH --IF SUCH WILL MAKE YOU FEEL BETTER-- BUT YOU CAN NO MORE ALTER THE PATTERN OF DESTINY THAN STOP THE SUN FROM RISING.
TAKING YOUR CODE-NAME TO HEART, OLD FRIEND?
THERE ARE MOMENTS WHEN IT'S NO FUN BEING WITH SOMEONE WHO CAN "SEE" THE FUTURE.

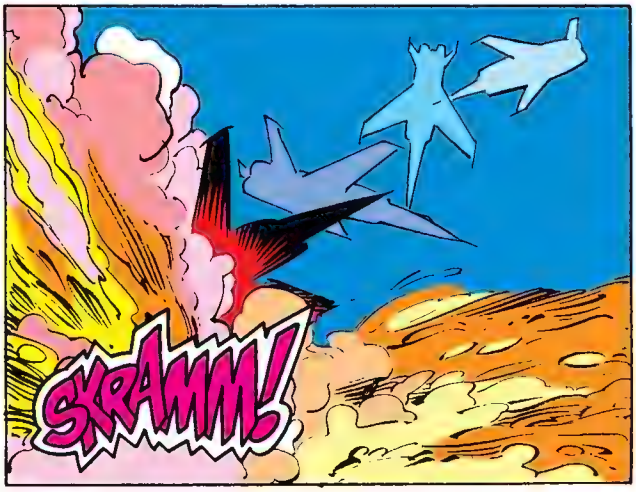
YOU SHOULD TRY BEING THAT PERSON.
IRENIE, WHAT'S WRONG?!
YOU'VE BEEN ON EDGE FOR DAYS, MORE SO THAN EVER I'VE SEEN YOU.
IS THERE SOME DANGER?

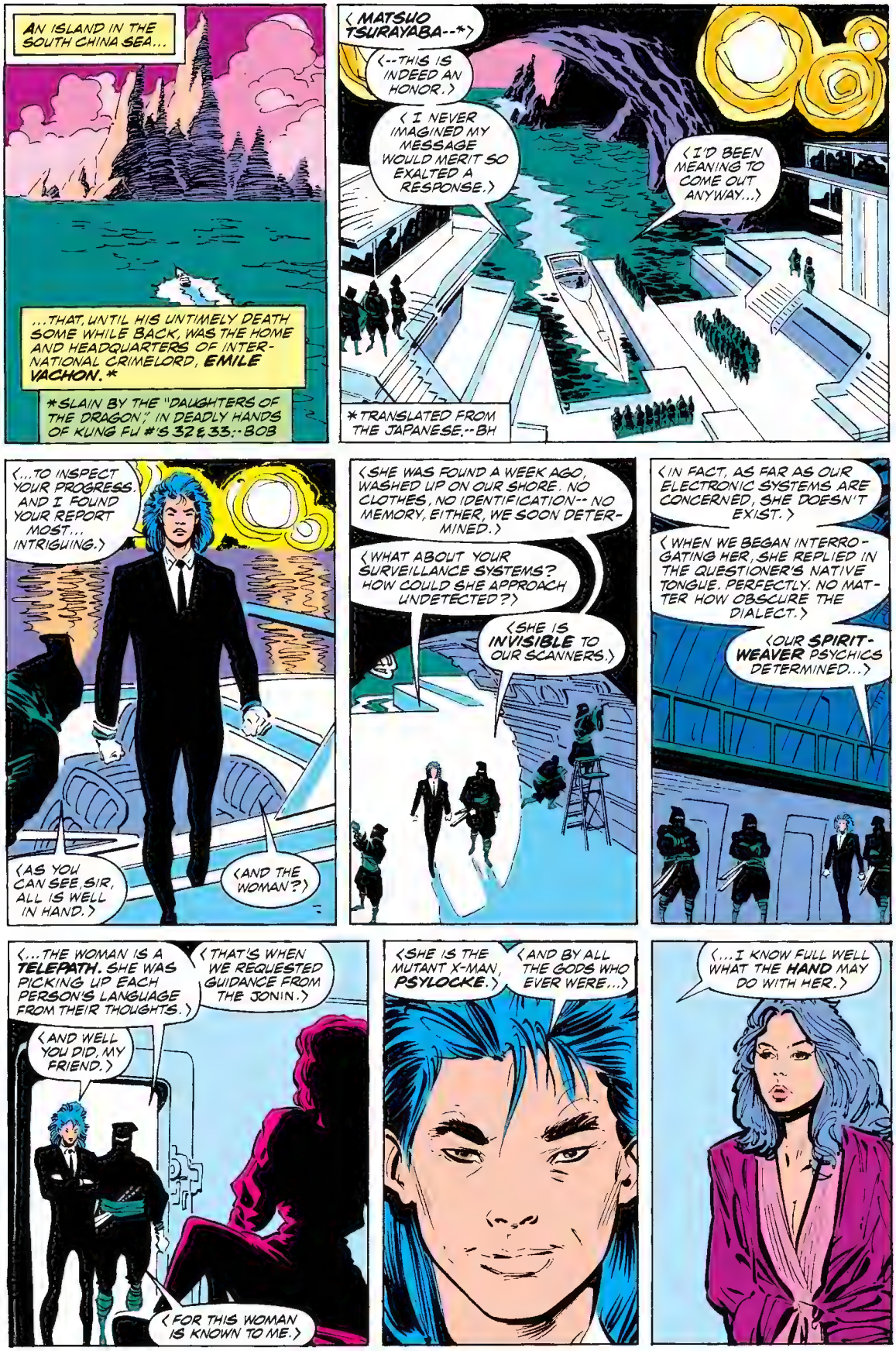
FOR HEAVEN'S SAKE, WOMAN, LET ME HELP!
IT'S TOO LATE FOR THAT.

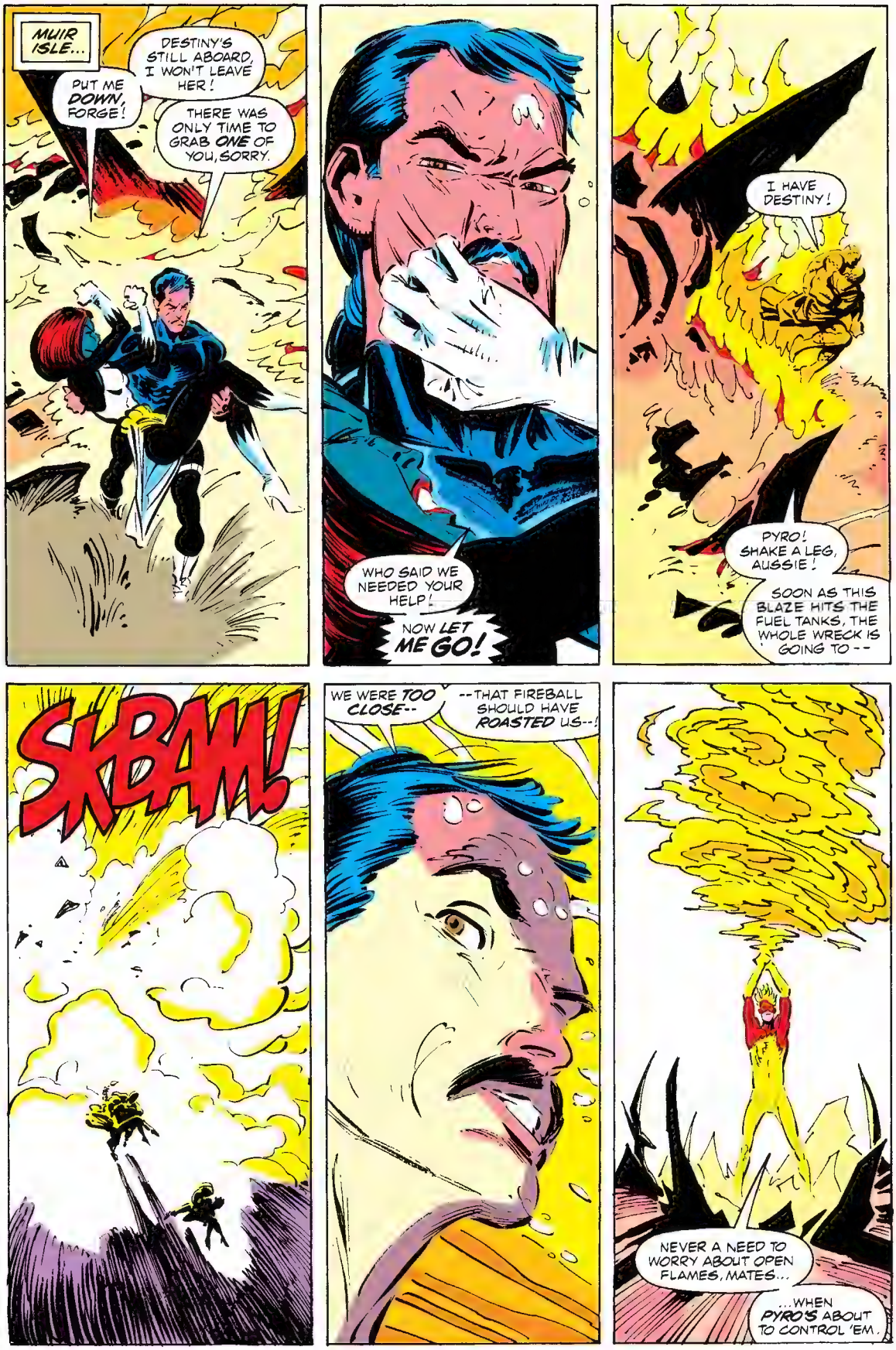

SOMEBODY DROPPED ON THE NOSE!
WHO IS SHE, MAJOR?! WHAT'S SHE DO--


KIAI!
AHRRGH!
SKASH!
SHLUKT!


PLANE'S OUTTA CONTROL!
CANNOT SAVE US...
THE PILOTS--!
...ANYMORE THAN THEY COULD THEM-SELVES.


SKRAMM!


AN ISLAND IN THE SOUTH CHINA SEA...
...THAT, UNTIL HIS UNTIMELY DEATH SOME WHILE BACK, WAS THE HOME AND HEADQUARTERS OF INTERNATIONAL CRIMELORD, EMILE VACHON.*
*SLAIN BY THE "DAUGHTERS OF THE DRAGON," IN DEADLY HANDS OF KUNG FU #'S 32&33:--BOB
〈MATSUO TSURAYABA--*〉
〈--THIS IS INDEED AN HONOR.〉
〈I NEVER IMAGINED MY MESSAGE WOULD MERIT SO EXALTED A RESPONSE.〉
〈I'D BEEN MEANING TO COME OUT ANYWAY...〉
*TRANSLATED FROM THE JAPANESE.--BH
〈...TO INSPECT YOUR PROGRESS. AND I FOUND YOUR REPORT MOST... INTRIGUING.〉
〈AS YOU CAN SEE, SIR, ALL IS WELL IN HAND.〉
〈AND THE WOMAN?〉
〈SHE WAS FOUND A WEEK AGO, WASHED UP ON OUR SHORE. NO CLOTHES, NO IDENTIFICATION-- NO MEMORY, EITHER, WE SOON DETERMINED.〉
〈WHAT ABOUT YOUR SURVEILLANCE SYSTEMS? HOW COULD SHE APPROACH UNDETECTED?〉
〈SHE IS INVISIBLE TO OUR SCANNERS.〉
〈IN FACT, AS FAR AS OUR ELECTRONIC SYSTEMS ARE CONCERNED, SHE DOESN'T EXIST.〉
〈WHEN WE BEGAN INTERROGATING HER, SHE REPLIED IN THE QUESTIONER'S NATIVE TONGUE. PERFECTLY. NO MATTER HOW OBSCURE THE DIALECT.〉
〈OUR SPIRIT-WEAVER PSYCHICS DETERMINED...〉
〈...THE WOMAN IS A TELEPATH. SHE WAS PICKING UP EACH PERSON'S LANGUAGE FROM THEIR THOUGHTS.〉
〈THAT'S WHEN WE REQUESTED GUIDANCE FROM THE JONIN.〉
〈AND WELL YOU DID, MY FRIEND.〉
〈FOR THIS WOMAN IS KNOWN TO ME.〉
〈SHE IS THE MUTANT X-MAN, PSYLOCKE.〉
〈AND BY ALL THE GODS WHO EVER WERE...〉
〈...I KNOW FULL WELL WHAT THE HAND MAY DO WITH HER.〉


MUIR ISLE...
DESTINY'S STILL ABOARD, I WON'T LEAVE HER!
PUT ME DOWN, FORGE!
THERE WAS ONLY TIME TO GRAB ONE OF YOU, SORRY.
WHO SAID WE NEEDED YOUR HELP!
NOW LET ME GO!
I HAVE DESTINY!
PYRO! SHAKE A LEG, AUSSIE!
SOON AS THIS BLAZE HITS THE FUEL TANKS, THE WHOLE WRECK IS GOING TO--
SKBAM!
WE WERE TOO CLOSE--
--THAT FIREBALL SHOULD HAVE ROASTED US--!
NEVER A NEED TO WORRY ABOUT OPEN FLAMES, MATES...
...WHEN PYRO'S ABOUT TO CONTROL 'EM.

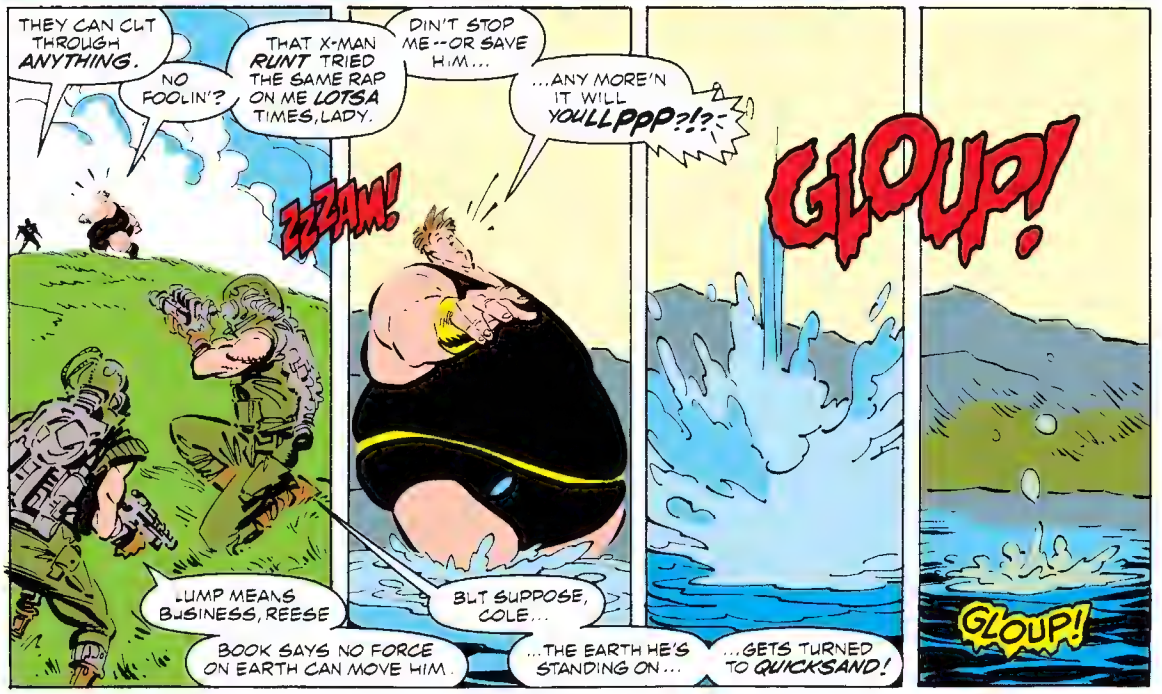
WE'RE SAFE, FORGE.
YOUR "SERVICES" ARE NO LONGER REQUIRED.
WOULD YOU RATHER I'D LEFT YOU TO BURN?
I CAN TAKE CARE OF MYSELF, THANK YOU VERY MUCH.
AS I HAVE BEEN, SINCE BEFORE YOU WERE BORN.
TAKE DESTINY TO MACTAGGART'S LAB COMPLEX. STAY BY HER
I'LL BE MORE USE OUT HERE. SO WILL SHE.
I COMMAND FREEDOM FORCE, MISTER.
YOU'LL DO AS YOU'RE TOLD!
VAL COOPER MADE IT ABUNDANTLY CLEAR HOW VALUABLE YOU ARE TO THE UNITED STATES, SO MUCH SO WE'RE OBLIGED TO DO WHATEVER YOU ASK.
IN MY BOOK, THAT MAKES YOU FAR TOO VALUABLE TO RISK IN COMBAT.
IT'S NO SMALL TASK I'M GIVING YOU, FORGE. IF ANY HARM COMES TO DESTINY, IT HAD BETTER BE BECAUSE YOU'RE ALREADY DEAD.
PYRO, PAST TIME WE LET THE OPPOSITION KNOW WHAT THEY'RE UP AGAINST.
MY PLEASURE, BOSS.
FLAME BLAST!
SO HOT IT'S BURNIN' THROUGH THE SOD...
.. RIGHT DOWN TO THE ISLAND'S BEDROCK!
BIG DEAL.
IT'S ONLY FIRE, BONE
AIN'T EVEN SCORCHIN' MY METAL FRAME.
HECK--MY SYSTEM'S ACTUALLY ABSORBIN' THE KINETIC ENERGY AS ADDITIONAL POWER.

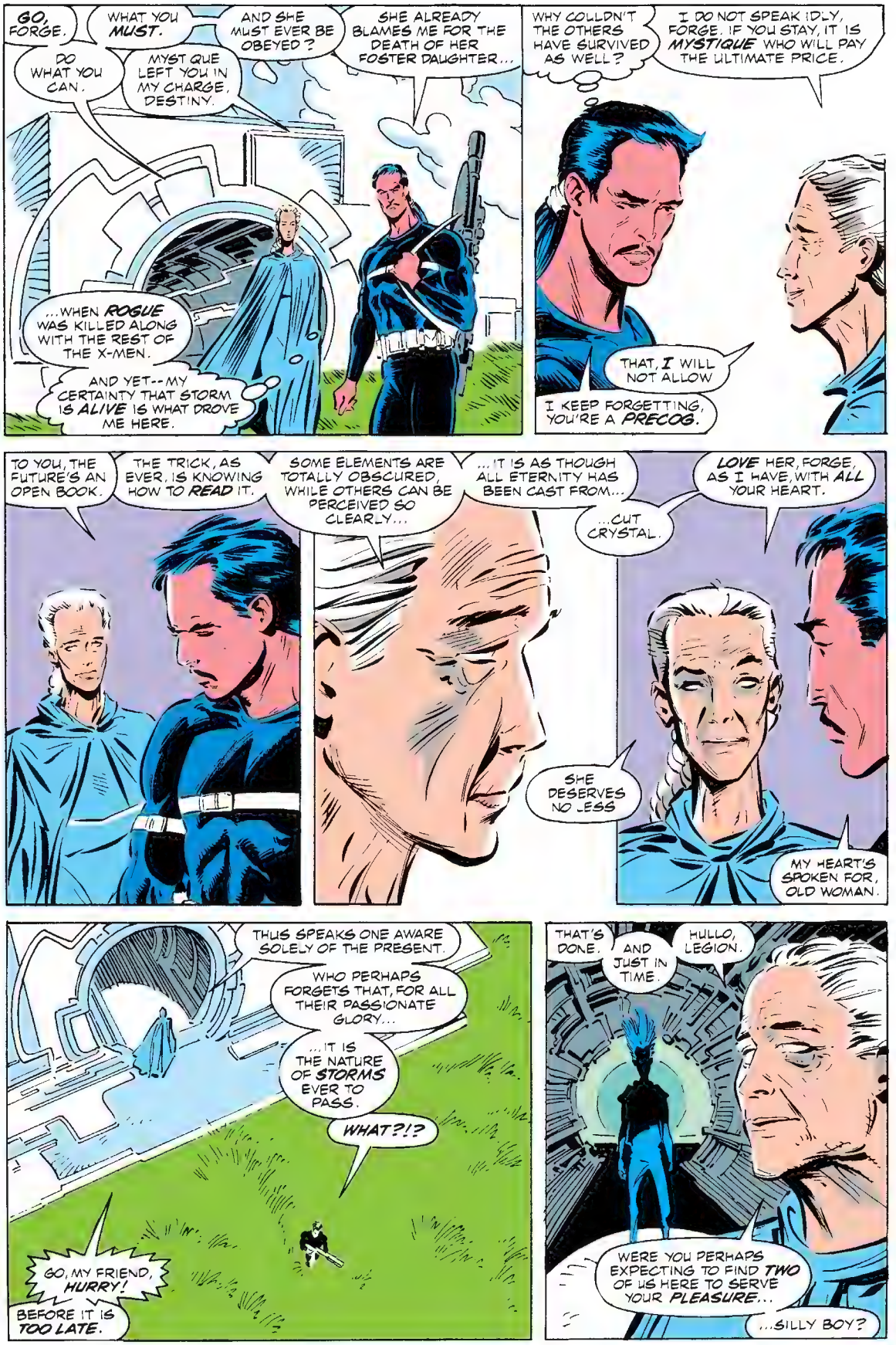
PYRO'S A BUST, JANOS.
BEST BURY THEM SUCKERS.
AS GOOD AS DONE, BLOB.
THEN YOU CAN POUND 'EM FLAT--EH?!
SOMEONE--COMING OVER THE CREST OF MY EARTH-WAVE!

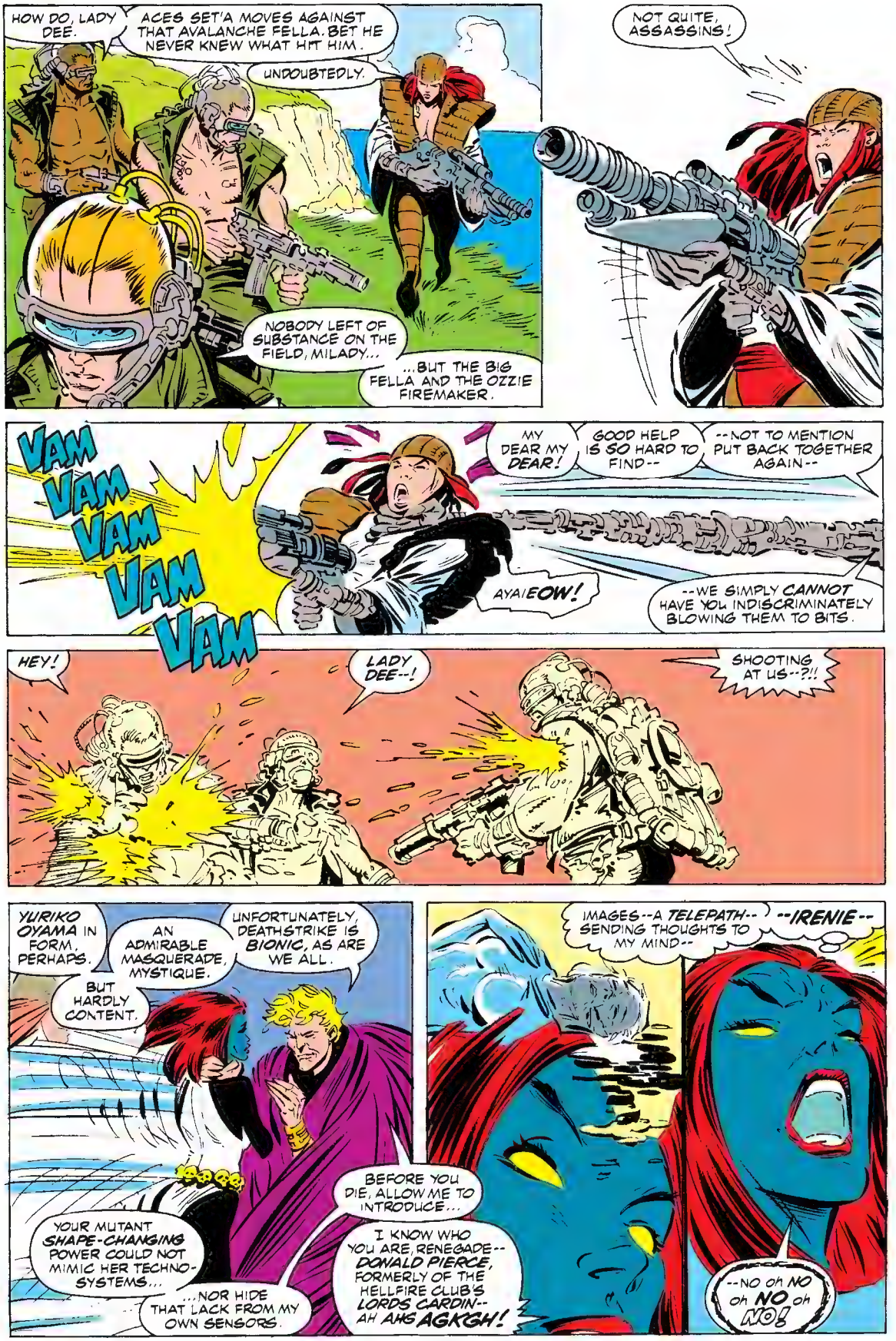
I AM CALLED LADY DEATHSTRIKE, OUTLANDER.
FOR REASONS WHICH I TRUST...

...HAVE JUST BECOME PAINFULLY APPARENT.
AHRRRGH!

AVALANCHE!
YOU--YOU--!
MY CLAWS, LUMMOX, LIKE WOLVERINE'S, ARE ADAMANTIUM.


THEY CAN CUT THROUGH ANYTHING.
NO FOOLIN'?
THAT X-MAN RUNT TRIED THE SAME RAP ON ME LOTSA TIMES, LADY.
ZZZAM!
DIN'T STOP ME--OR SAVE HIM...
...ANY MORE'N IT WILL YOULLPPP?!?
GLOUP!
GLOUP!
LUMP MEANS BUSINESS, REESE
BOOK SAYS NO FORCE ON EARTH CAN MOVE HIM.
BUT SUPPOSE, COLE...
...THE EARTH HE'S STANDING ON...
...GETS TURNED TO QUICKSAND!

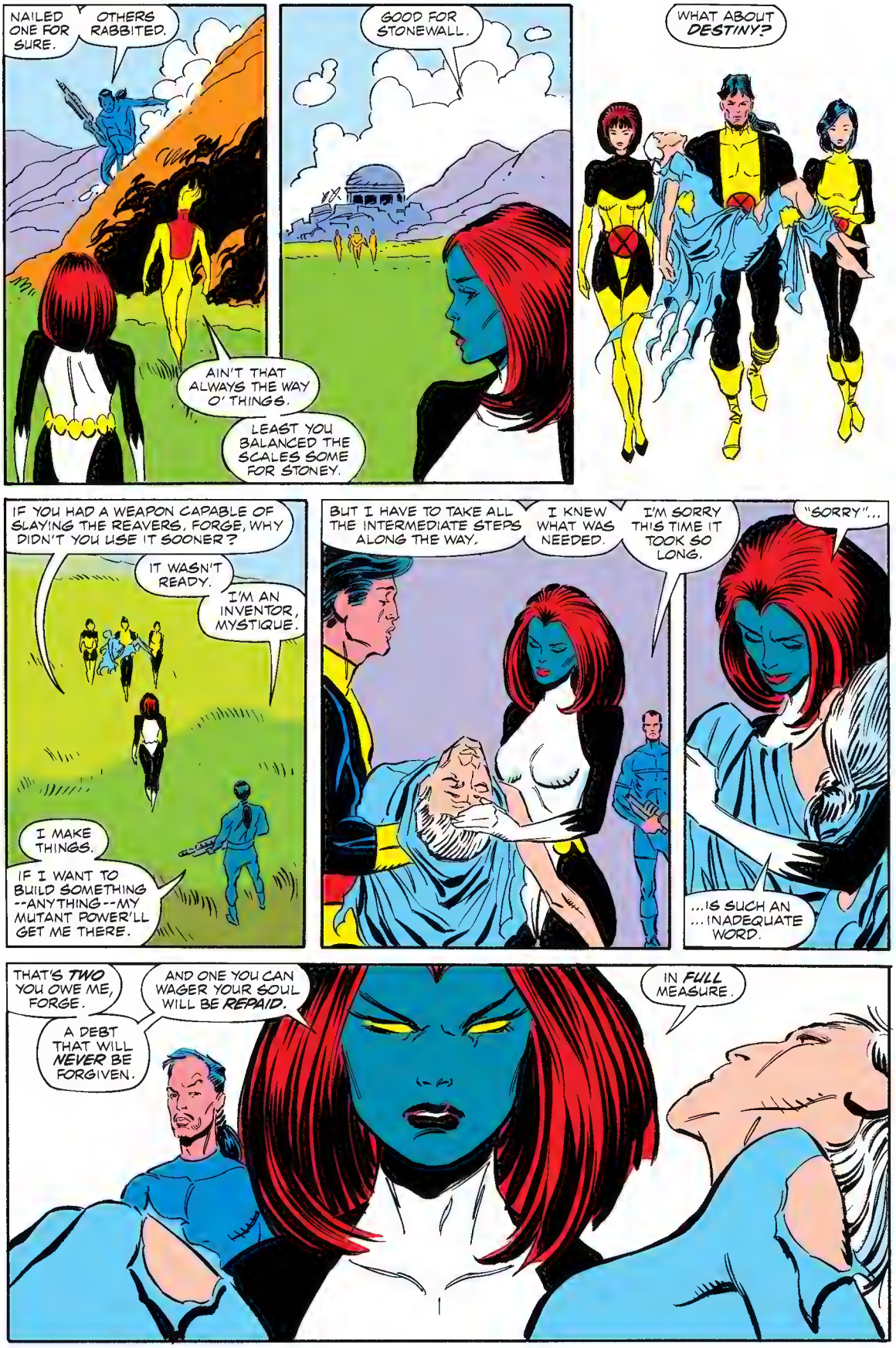

GO, FORGE.
WHAT YOU MUST.
AND SHE MUST EVER BE OBEYED?
SHE ALREADY BLAMES ME FOR THE DEATH OF HER FOSTER DAUGHTER...
DO WHAT YOU CAN.
MYST QUE LEFT YOU IN MY CHARGE, DESTINY.
...WHEN ROGUE WAS KILLED ALONG WITH THE REST OF THE X-MEN.
AND YET--MY CERTAINTY THAT STORM IS ALIVE IS WHAT DROVE ME HERE.
WHY COULDN'T THE OTHERS HAVE SURVIVED AS WELL?
I DO NOT SPEAK IDLY, FORGE. IF YOU STAY, IT IS MYSTIQUE WHO WILL PAY THE ULTIMATE PRICE.
THAT, I WILL NOT ALLOW
I KEEP FORGETTING, YOU'RE A PRECOG.
TO YOU, THE FUTURE'S AN OPEN BOOK.
THE TRICK, AS EVER, IS KNOWING HOW TO READ IT.
SOME ELEMENTS ARE TOTALLY OBSCURED, WHILE OTHERS CAN BE PERCEIVED SO CLEARLY...
...IT IS AS THOUGH ALL ETERNITY HAS BEEN CAST FROM...
...CUT CRYSTAL.
LOVE HER, FORGE, AS I HAVE, WITH ALL YOUR HEART.
SHE DESERVES NO LESS
MY HEART'S SPOKEN FOR, OLD WOMAN.
THUS SPEAKS ONE AWARE SOLELY OF THE PRESENT.
WHO PERHAPS FORGETS THAT, FOR ALL THEIR PASSIONATE GLORY...
...IT IS THE NATURE OF STORMS EVER TO PASS.
WHAT?!?
GO, MY FRIEND, HURRY!
BEFORE IT IS TOO LATE.
THAT'S DONE.
AND JUST IN TIME.
HULLO, LEGION.
WERE YOU PERHAPS EXPECTING TO FIND TWO OF US HERE TO SERVE YOUR PLEASURE...
...SILLY BOY?


HOW DO, LADY DEE.
ACES SET'A MOVES AGAINST THAT AVALANCHE FELLA. BET HE NEVER KNEW WHAT HIT HIM.
UNDOUBTEDLY.
NOBODY LEFT OF SUBSTANCE ON THE FIELD, MILADY...
...BUT THE BIG FELLA AND THE OZZIE FIREMAKER.
NOT QUITE, ASSASSINS!
VAM VAM VAM VAM VAM
MY DEAR MY DEAR!
GOOD HELP IS SO HARD TO FIND--
--NOT TO MENTION PUT BACK TOGETHER AGAIN--
AYAIEOW!
--WE SIMPLY CANNOT HAVE YOU INDISCRIMINATELY BLOWING THEM TO BITS.
HEY!
LADY DEE--!
SHOOTING AT US--?!!
YURIKO OYAMA IN FORM, PERHAPS.
AN ADMIRABLE MASQUERADE, MYSTIQUE.
UNFORTUNATELY, DEATHSTRIKE IS BIONIC, AS ARE WE ALL.
BUT HARDLY CONTENT.
YOUR MUTANT SHAPE-CHANGING POWER COULD NOT MIMIC HER TECHNO-SYSTEMS...
...NOR HIDE THAT LACK FROM MY OWN SENSORS.
BEFORE YOU DIE, ALLOW ME TO INTRODUCE...
I KNOW WHO YOU ARE, RENEGADE-- DONALD PIERCE, FORMERLY OF THE HELLFIRE CLUB'S LORDS CARDIN-- AH AHS AGKGH!
IMAGES--A TELEPATH-- SENDING THOUGHTS TO MY MIND--
--IRENIE--
--NO oh NO oh NO oh NO!

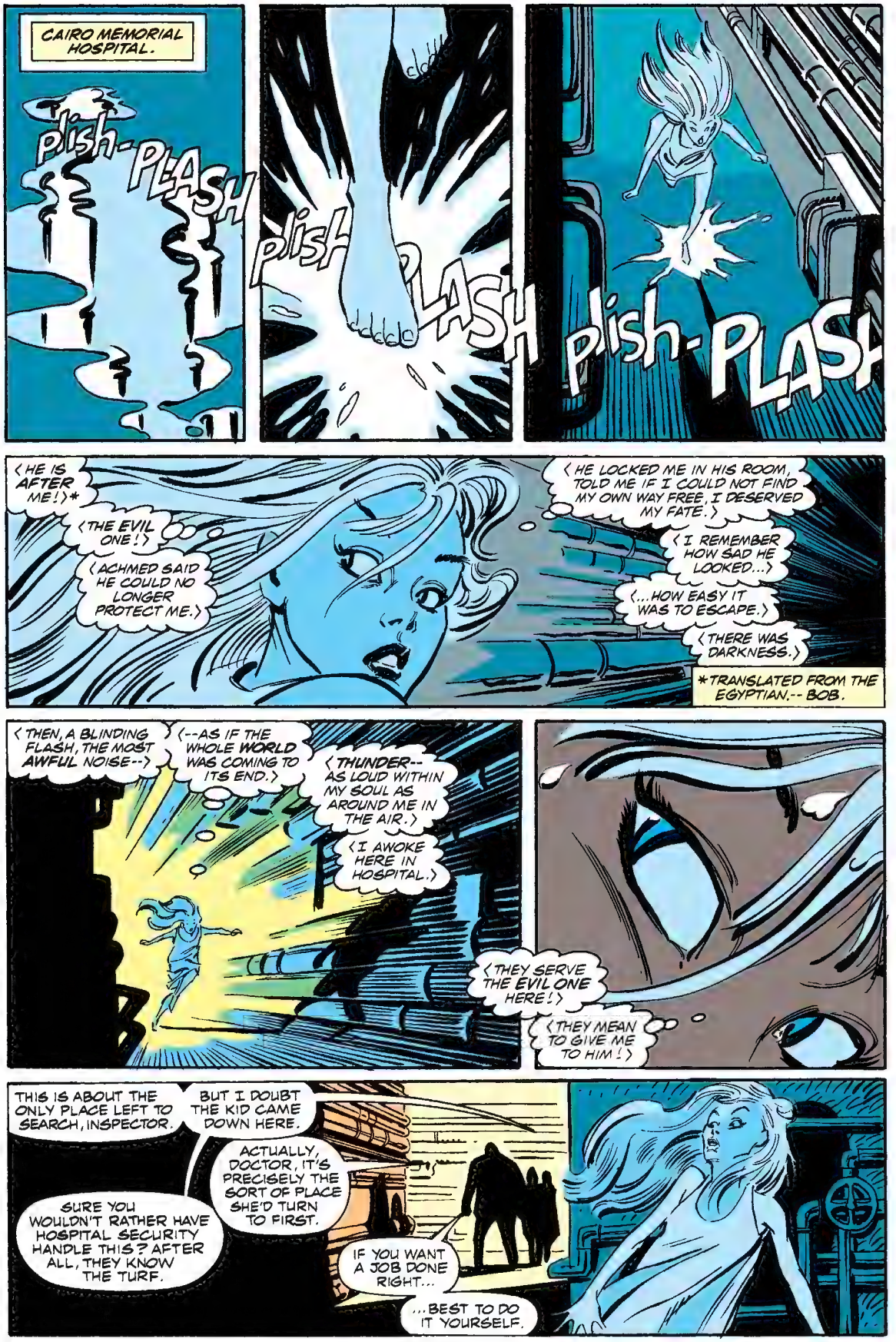
THAT SCREAM--
--NEVER HEARD ANYTHING LIKE IT, EVEN IN THE WAR--
--DIDN'T FIGURE MYSTIQUE HAD THAT DEPTH OF EMOTION IN HER.
I HAVE THE REAVERS' TOP DOG, PYRO--
--GET MYSTIQUE CLEAR!
BETTER IDEA, COBBER.
HOW 'BOUT I FLASH-FRY THESE YOBBOS INTO...
...CRISPY CRITTERS--?!!?
WHO SNUFFED MY FLAME?
FLOOP!
YOU'VE COURAGE TO MATCH YOUR STRENGTH, STONEWALL...
BUT IN THIS INSTANCE...
...BOTH WILL AVAIL YOU NAUGHT!
THERE'S NO WALL BEEN BUILT...
STONEY!
...THAT TECHNOLOGY CAN'T SMASH DOWN!
HE--
--HE'S--!

SOMEBODY OUT THERE LIKES US A WHOLE LOT.
THAT'S TWICE NOW HE'S INTERFERED IN OUR FAVOR.
SMART MOVE.
STOP PLAYING, SKULL-BUSTER.
DROP THEM WITH YOUR NEXT BURST...
...SO WE CAN BE ON ABOUT OUR BUSINESS.
PRETTY MUCH THE WAY I FIGURED T'CHECK OUT.
THOUGH THE TIMING LEAVES A BIT T'BE DESIRED.
I'LL NEVER KNOW IF MY NEW BOOK'S A BESTSELLER.
I'M SORRY I BROUGHT YOU TO THIS, PYRO.
BREAKS O' THE GAME, LUV.
KNEW THAT WHEN I SIGNED ON.
WORSE WAYS TO GO, THAN WITH FRIENDS--
HOLEE!?!
BOOM!
SKULL-BUSTER!
BANG, BUSTER.
YOU'RE DEAD.
WHO'S NEXT?

SNIPER!
MUST BE ON THE RIDGE.
NO WAY TO GET A S GHT ON PRECISELY WHERE...
.. WITHOUT RISK NG THE SAME.
WATCH YOURSELF, COLE!
I HEAR THAT, SARGE!
SHOOTER'S GOOD, BUT HE A.N'T PERFECT.
DIAGNOSTIC READS ACROSS - THE BOARD DISRUPTION OF HIS B:ONICS SYSTEMS.
SKULLY'S HISTORY, PIERCE, TOTALLY FRIED!
THERE MUST BE A WAY TO COUNTER THIS
NOT HERE, LORD, NOT NOW.
LADY'S RIGHT.
HIGH GROUND TURNS THIS WHOLE VALLEY INTO A K.LL ZONE.
WE'VE INFLICTED MAJOR DAMAGE ON OUR FOES, PIERCE--
--WE MAY EVEN HAVE A HIDDEN ALLY AMONG THEIR NUMBER--
--WHY NOT QUIT WHILE WE ARE AHEAD?
LEAVE THE SURVIVORS TO LIVE IN FEAR OF OUR RETURN.
C'MON, BLONDIE.
AN INCH HIGHER, THAT'S ALL I ASK.
POP THAT PRETTY HEAD OF YOURS INTO VIEW...
...SO I CAN BLOW IT CLEAN OFF--
--C'MON C'MON C'MON--
--GIMME THE SHOT, THAT'S MY BOY-- BINGO!
BLAST, THEY TELEPORTED!
BOOM!
FTZASZSK!


NAILED ONE FOR SURE.
OTHERS RABBITED.
AIN'T THAT ALWAYS THE WAY O' THINGS.
LEAST YOU BALANCED THE SCALES SOME FOR STONEY.
GOOD FOR STONEWALL.
WHAT ABOUT DESTINY?
IF YOU HAD A WEAPON CAPABLE OF SLAYING THE REAVERS, FORGE, WHY DIDN'T YOU USE IT SOONER?
IT WASN'T READY.
I'M AN INVENTOR, MYSTIQUE.
I MAKE THINGS.
IF I WANT TO BUILD SOMETHING --ANYTHING--MY MUTANT POWER'LL GET ME THERE.
BUT I HAVE TO TAKE ALL THE INTERMEDIATE STEPS ALONG THE WAY.
I KNEW WHAT WAS NEEDED.
I'M SORRY THIS TIME IT TOOK SO LONG.
"SORRY"...
...IS SUCH AN ...INADEQUATE WORD.
THAT'S TWO YOU OWE ME, FORGE.
A DEBT THAT WILL NEVER BE FORGIVEN.
AND ONE YOU CAN WAGER YOUR SOUL WILL BE REPAID.
IN FULL MEASURE.

LATER--LONG AFTER FREEDOM FORCE'S DEPARTURE...
NO CONTACT WITH CALLISTO.
MOIRA'S FEARIN' THE WORST.
SEEMS TO BE A DAY FOR IT.
YE CAN'T BLAME YOURSELF, MAN.
IF NOT FOR ME, NONE OF THIS WOULD'VE HAPPENED.
IF NOT F'R YE, BOYO, WE'D ALL OF US ON THIS ROCK HA' DIED HERE.
COLD COMFORT, I'M AFRAID.
HAVE SOME COCOA, THEN. SURE T' WARM YE UP.
MOIRA WAS WONDERIN' IF YE'D MIND DEVISIN' A SECURITY NET F'R THE ISLAND, SOMETHIN' T'PREVENT A MESS LIKE THIS FROM HAPPENIN' AGAIN.
NO PROBLEM. BUT WON'T YOU BE HERE TO PROTECT THE PLACE?
GOT ANOTHER DISH ON MY PLATE.
PART OF THE REASON I CAME LOOKIN' F'R YE.
YOU A TRAVELIN' MAN, FORGE?
SAY WHAT?
LORNA SAYS THE X-MEN ARE ALIVE. I MEAN T'FIND 'EM.
WOULDN'T MIND HAVIN' SOMEBODY ALONG T'WATCH ME BACK.
CONSIDERING ALL THAT'S GONE DOWN...
...YOU SURE I'M YOUR MAN?
WOULDN'T BE ASKIN', OTHERWISE.
THEN COUNT ME IN, BANSHEE.
ALL THE WAY.


CAIRO MEMORIAL HOSPITAL.
plish-PLASH
plish
PLASH
plish-PLASH
〈HE IS AFTER ME!〉*
〈THE EVIL ONE!〉
〈ACHMED SAID HE COULD NO LONGER PROTECT ME.〉
〈HE LOCKED ME IN HIS ROOM, TOLD ME IF I COULD NOT FIND MY OWN WAY FREE, I DESERVED MY FATE.〉
〈I REMEMBER HOW SAD HE LOOKED...〉
〈...HOW EASY IT WAS TO ESCAPE.〉
〈THERE WAS DARKNESS.〉
*TRANSLATED FROM THE EGYPTIAN.-- BOB.
〈THEN, A BLINDING FLASH, THE MOST AWFUL NOISE--〉
〈--AS IF THE WHOLE WORLD WAS COMING TO ITS END.〉
〈THUNDER-- AS LOUD WITHIN MY SOUL AS AROUND ME IN THE AIR.〉
〈I AWOKE HERE IN HOSPITAL.〉
〈THEY SERVE THE EVIL ONE HERE!〉
〈THEY MEAN TO GIVE ME TO HIM!〉
THIS IS ABOUT THE ONLY PLACE LEFT TO SEARCH, INSPECTOR.
BUT I DOUBT THE KID CAME DOWN HERE.
ACTUALLY, DOCTOR, IT'S PRECISELY THE SORT OF PLACE SHE'D TURN TO FIRST.
SURE YOU WOULDN'T RATHER HAVE HOSPITAL SECURITY HANDLE THIS? AFTER ALL, THEY KNOW THE TURF.
IF YOU WANT A JOB DONE RIGHT...
...BEST TO DO IT YOURSELF.

I STILL DON'T SEE THE REASON FOR ALL THIS FUSS.
OKAY, SHE'S A MUTANT, IS THAT ANY REASON TO MAKE A FEDERAL CASE OUT OF THINGS?
CONSIDERING THE MUTANT REGISTRATION ACT IS A FEDERAL LAW, YES.
SHE'S JUST A KID.
STRIKES ME, INSPECTOR, FROM THE WAY YOU'RE ACTING, MAYBE YOU KNOW THE GIRL.
COULD BE THERE'S SOMETHING PERSONAL BETWEEN YOU TWO.
QUITE RIGHT, DOCTOR.
I DO KNOW HER.
AND THIS IS VERY PERSONAL.
SO MUCH SO I REALLY CAN'T ALLOW EVEN THE SLIGHTEST THREAT OF INTERFERENCE
YOU DO UNDERSTAND, I TRUST.
YAAGKGH!
THAT YOUNG GIRL, I'M AFRAID, IS NOT SIMPLY A MUTANT, BUT A PSYCHOTICALLY DEADLY KILLER...
...WHO'S USED HER HADEAN POWERS TO TAKE THE LIFE OF HER PHYSICIAN.
HOW TRAGIC.
STUART?!?
WANTED FOR MURDER...
...SHE'LL HAVE NO ONE TO TURN TO.
AND WHENEVER SHE'S CAUGHT, THERE I'LL BE, WAITING.
IT'S ONLY A MATTER OF TIME.
AND THEN, MY DEAR DR. SHEN--
--JUST AS YOU ARE NOW--
NO PLEASE NO PLEASE NO
--STORM WILL AT LONG LAST BE MINE.
FOREVER!
NEXT: LADY MANDARIN!

CLASSIC X-MEN

No. 39

The Uncanny X-Men #248 was Jim Lee's first published X-Men story, but the assignment that earned him the job was the *Classic X-Men* #39 (November 1989) backup "Briggs' Revenge."

Writer: Ann Nocenti (*Classic X-Men* No. 39)
Penciler: Jim Lee (*Classic X-Men* No. 39)
Inker: Josef Rubinstein (*Classic X-Men* No. 39)
Letterer: Jim Novak (*Classic X-Men* No. 39)
Colorist: Gregory Wright (*Classic X-Men* No. 39)
Editor: Bob Harras (*Classic X-Men* No. 39)
Art & Color Restoration: Logan Kelleher (*Classic X-Men* No. 39)

WHAT THE--?

Nos. 1-5

Reigniting Marvel's penchant for parody, *What The--?!* debuted in August 1988 and wasted no time honing its edge on the X-Men just like its 1967-69 forbear *Not Brand Echh*.

Writers: Peter B. Gillis (*What The--?!* No. 1)
Al Milgrom (*What The--?!* No. 2)
Kurt Busiek (*What The--?!* Nos. 3-4)
Peter David (*What The--?!* No. 4)
Terry Austin (*What The--?!* No. 5)
Walt Jaschek (*What The--?!* No. 5)
Jim Lee (*What The--?!* No. 5)

Pencilers: Jon Bogdanove (*What The--?!* No. 1)
Mike Mignola (*What The--?!* No. 2)
James Fry (*What The--?!* Nos. 3-4)
Kyle Baker (*What The--?!* No. 3)
Hector Collazo (*What The--?!* No. 4)
Jim Lee (*What The--?!* No. 5)

Inkers: Al Milgrom (*What The--?!* Nos. 1, 5)
Al Williamson (*What The--?!* Nos. 2, 5)
Hector Collazo (*What The--?!* No. 3)
Kyle Baker (*What The--?!* Nos. 3-4)
James Fry (*What The--?!* No. 4)
Jim Lee (*What The--?!* No. 5)

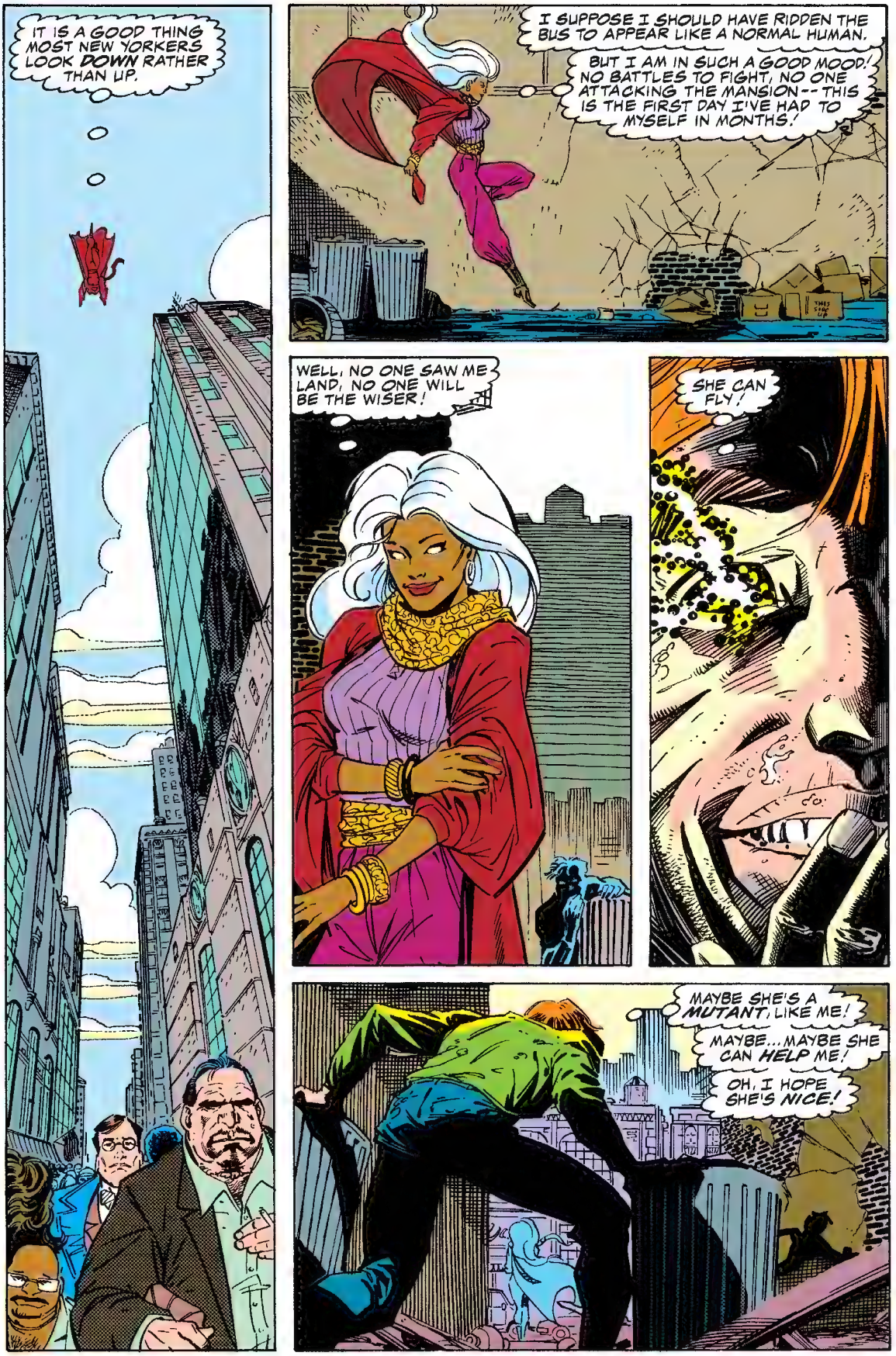
Letterers: Joe Rosen (*What The--?!* No. 1)
Phil Felix (*What The--?!* No. 2)
Michael Heisler (*What The--?!* No. 3)
Rick Parker (*What The--?!* Nos. 3-5)
Janice Chiang (*What The--?!* No. 5)

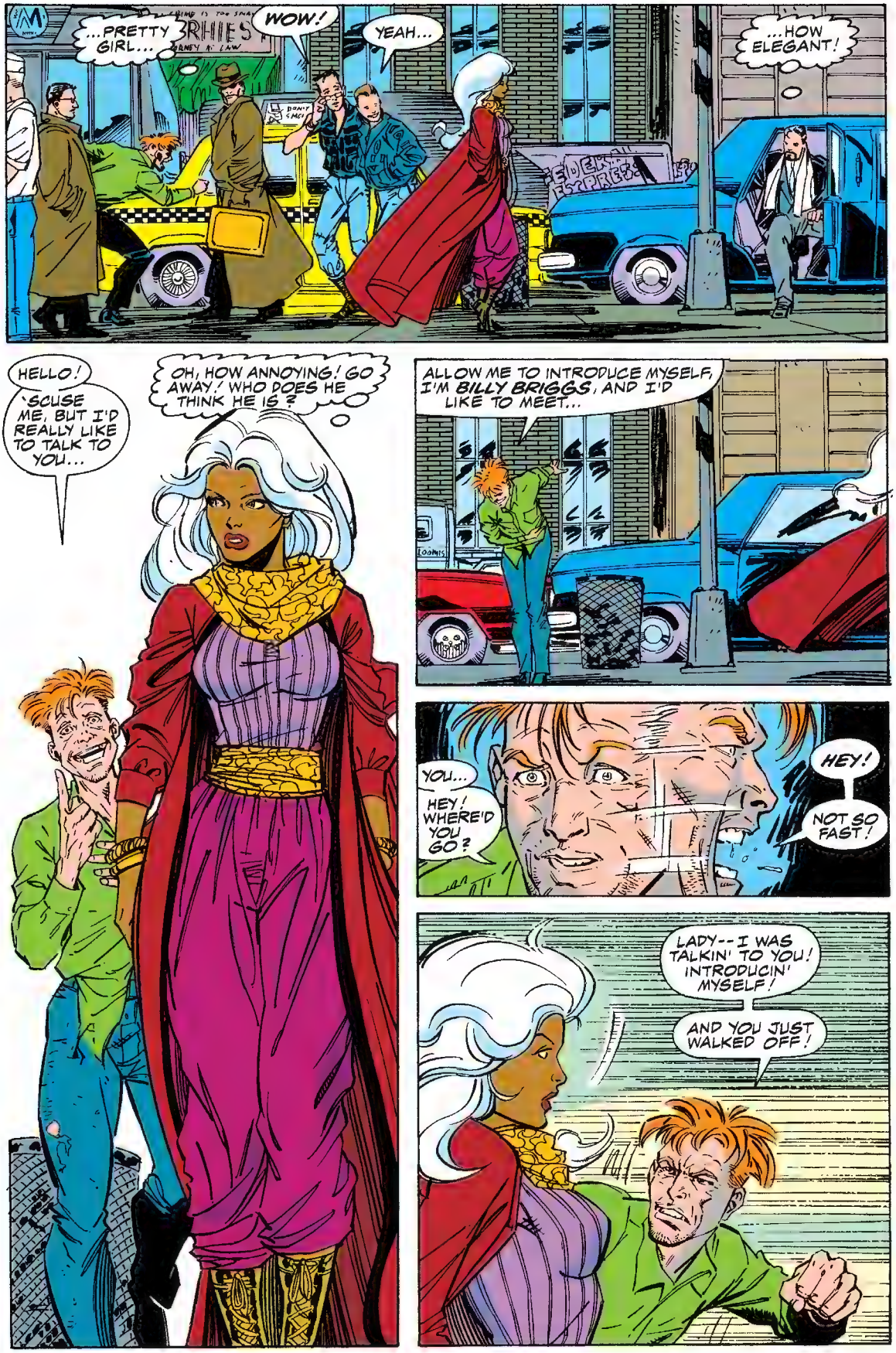
Colorists: Gregory Wright (*What The--?!* Nos. 1, 3-5)
Petra Scotese (*What The--?!* No. 2)

Editors: Carl Potts (*What The--?!* Nos. 1-2, 5)
Jim Salicrup (*What The--?!* Nos. 3-4)

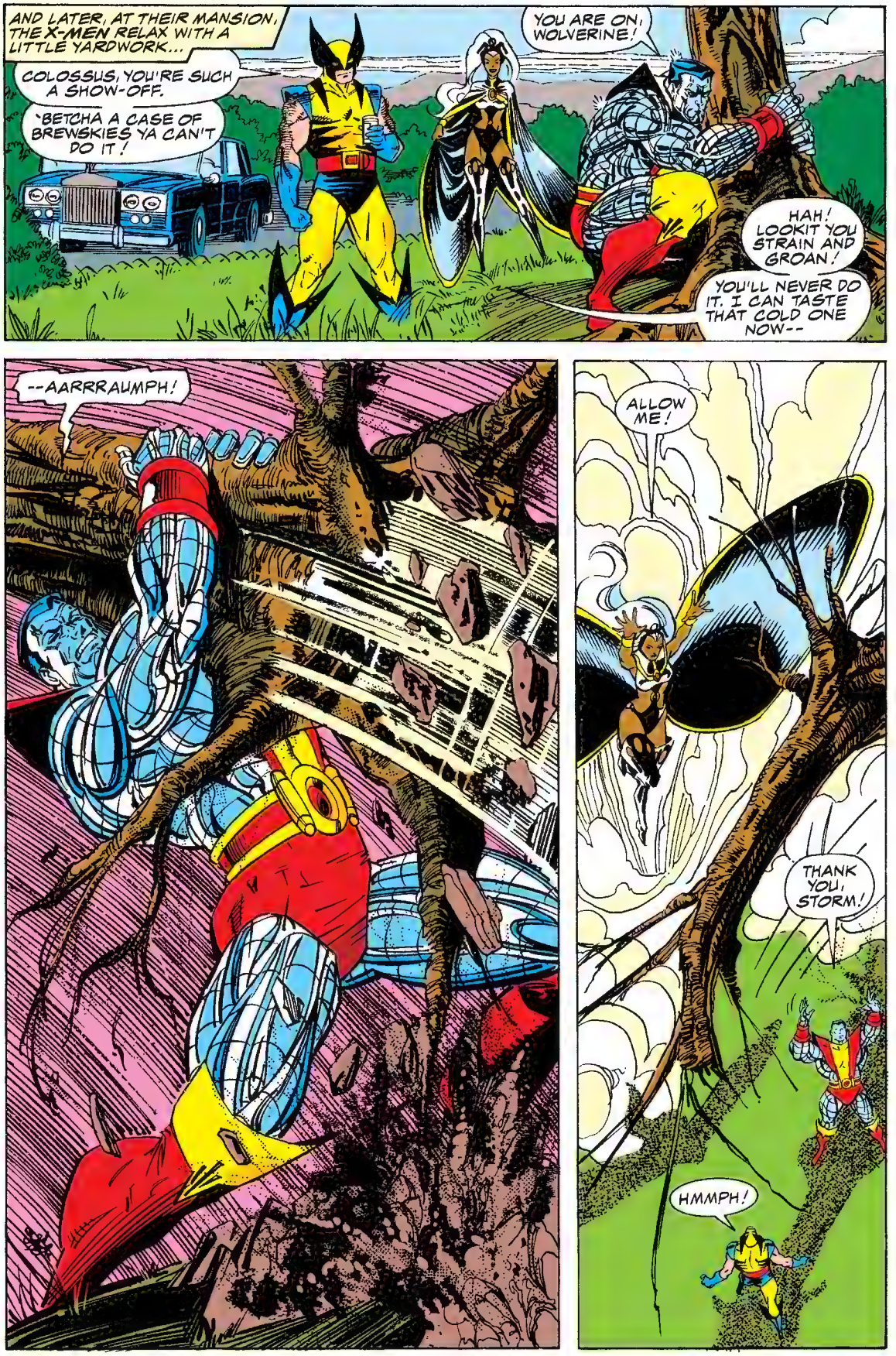
Art & Color Restoration: Logan Kelleher (*What The--?!* Nos. 1-5)

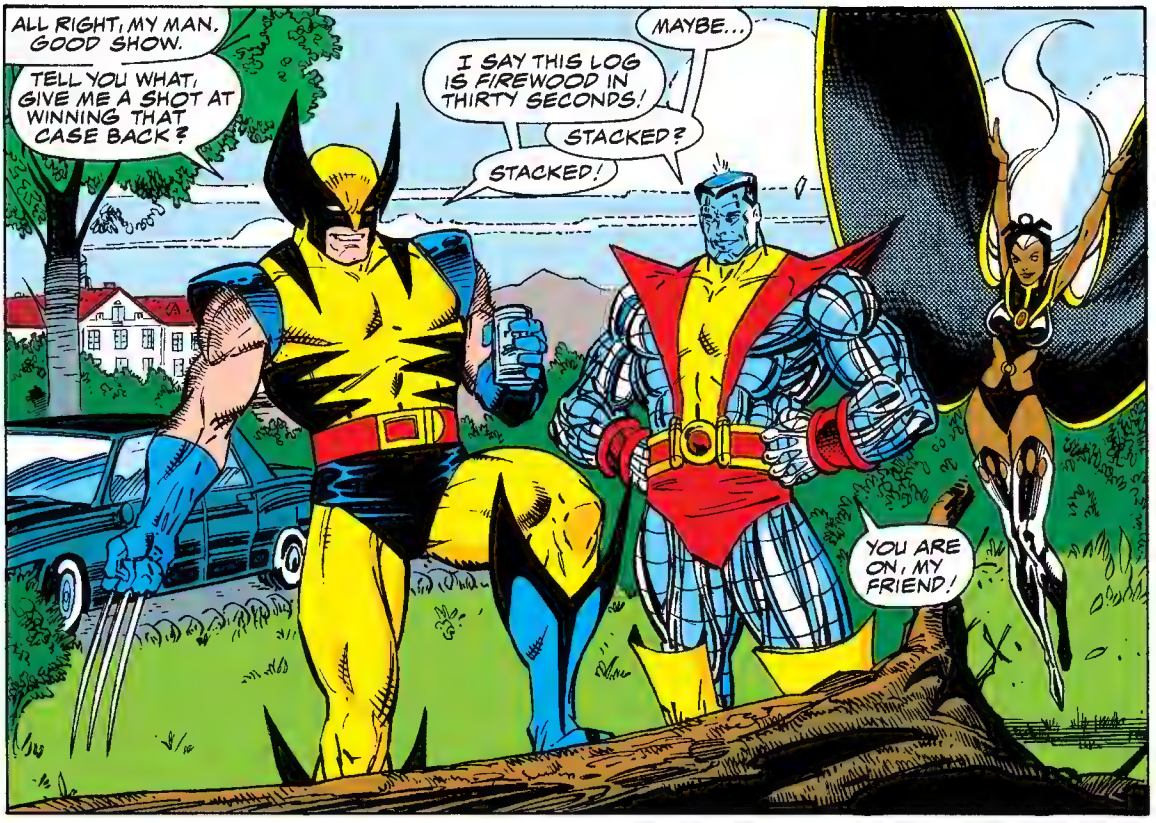
STORM IS AN X-MAN, A MUTANT BLESSED WITH THE GIFT OF RIDING THE WINDS AND CONTROLLING THE WEATHER ABOUT HER. BUT MUTANT X-MEN ARE GENERALLY CONSIDERED OUTLAWS AND THEIR IDENTITIES ARE SECRET.
SO WHY DOES SHE FLY THE SKIES OF MANHATTAN FOR ALL TO SEE?
BECAUSE IT'S A GLORIOUS DAY, AND SOMETIMES A GIRL JUST CAN'T RESIST.
BRIGGS' REVENGE

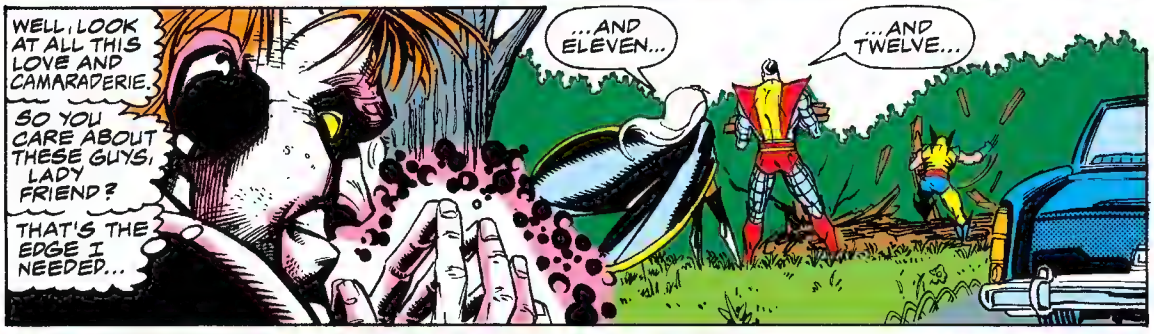

IT IS A GOOD THING MOST NEW YORKERS LOOK DOWN RATHER THAN UP.
I SUPPOSE I SHOULD HAVE RIDDEN THE BUS TO APPEAR LIKE A NORMAL HUMAN.
BUT I AM IN SUCH A GOOD MOOD! NO BATTLES TO FIGHT, NO ONE ATTACKING THE MANSION -- THIS IS THE FIRST DAY I'VE HAD TO MYSELF IN MONTHS!
WELL, NO ONE SAW ME LAND, NO ONE WILL BE THE WISER!
SHE CAN FLY!
MAYBE SHE'S A MUTANT, LIKE ME!
MAYBE... MAYBE SHE CAN HELP ME!
OH, I HOPE SHE'S NICE!


...PRETTY GIRL...
WOW!
YEAH...
...HOW ELEGANT!
HELLO!
'SCUSE ME, BUT I'D REALLY LIKE TO TALK TO YOU...
OH, HOW ANNOYING! GO AWAY! WHO DOES HE THINK HE IS?
ALLOW ME TO INTRODUCE MYSELF, I'M BILLY BRIGGS, AND I'D LIKE TO MEET...
YOU...
HEY! WHERE'D YOU GO?
HEY!
NOT SO FAST!
LADY--I WAS TALKIN' TO YOU! INTRODUCIN' MYSELF!
AND YOU JUST WALKED OFF!

WHY--
OOF!
LEAVE THE LADY ALONE. CAN'T YOU SEE YOU'RE BOTHERING HER?
THANK YOU. THAT WAS VERY GALLANT OF YOU.
SHE'S SMILING AT HIM!
ME AND MY GIRL
JENKINS BAR AND GRILL
IT WAS NOTHING! FOR A BEAUTIFUL WOMAN SUCH AS YOU... ANYTIME...
ANYWHERE...
SHE'S FLIRTING WITH HIM!
OH, I SEE! JUST 'CAUSE THIS RICH OIL-SLICK CON-MAN IS DRESSED NICE AND HANDSOME, SHE SMILES AT HIM!
WHILE OLD BILLY IS A LITTLE TOO UGLY AND MESSY FOR HER!
NO, THIS MUTANT LADY WOULDN'T HELP ME.
SHE'S AS PREJUDICED AS THE REST!
I HATE HER. I COULD KILL THEM BOTH RIGHT NOW, BUT I WON'T.
I'LL DO WORSE.
HER BREEZY, CAREFREE WAYS... HER ENJOYMENT OF LIFE... THAT'S WHAT I'LL STEAL FROM HER!
THIS IS THE LAST DAY SHE'LL EVER ENJOY!
GOODBYE... HOPE TO SEE YOU SOON...
ONE NEVER KNOWS...


AND LATER, AT THEIR MANSION, THE X-MEN RELAX WITH A LITTLE YARDWORK...
COLOSSUS, YOU'RE SUCH A SHOW-OFF.
'BETCHA A CASE OF BREWSKIES YA CAN'T DO IT!
YOU ARE ON, WOLVERINE!
HAH! LOOKIT YOU STRAIN AND GROAN!
YOU'LL NEVER DO IT. I CAN TASTE THAT COLD ONE NOW--
--AARRRAUMPH!
ALLOW ME!
THANK YOU, STORM!
HMMPH!

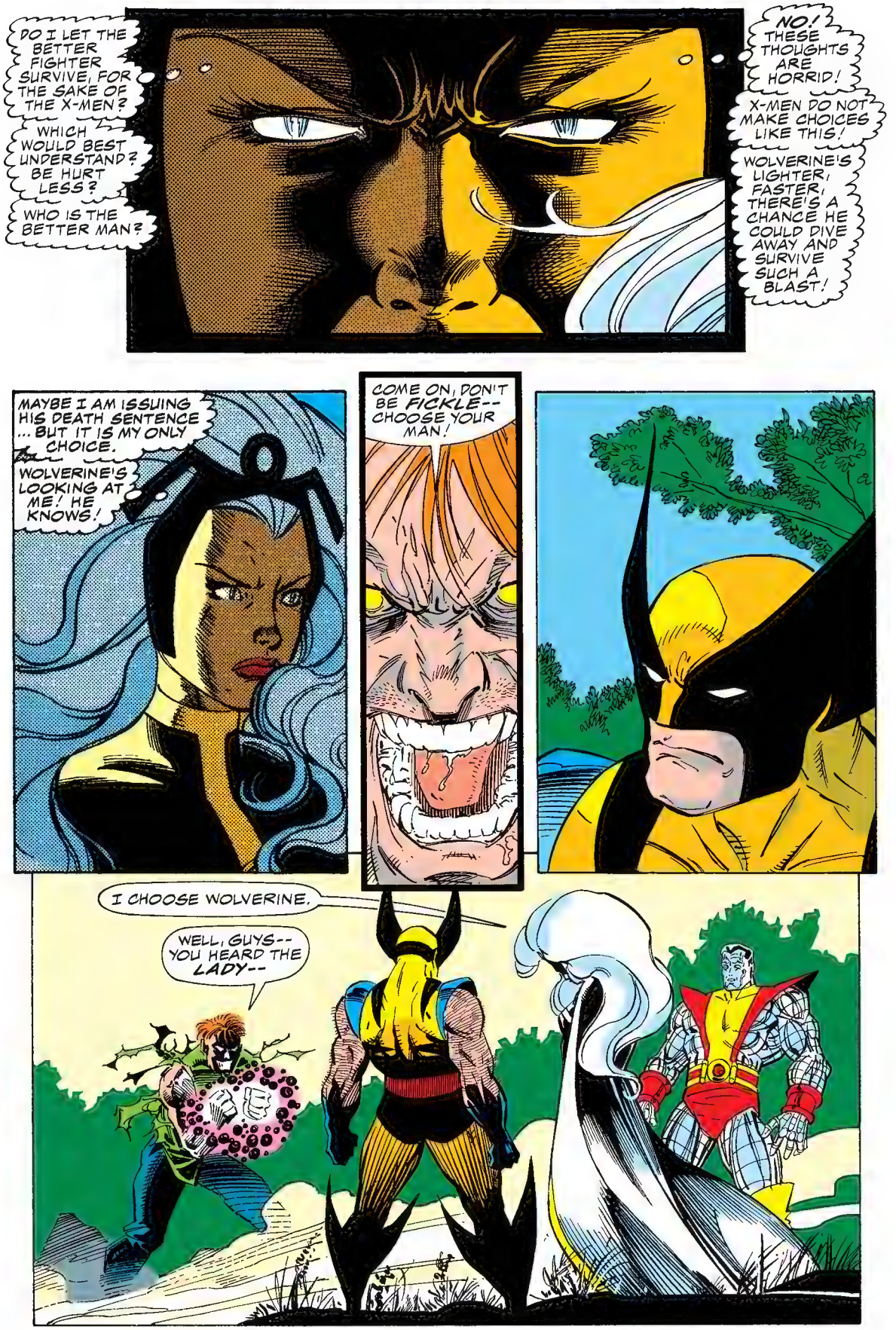

ALL RIGHT, MY MAN. GOOD SHOW.
TELL YOU WHAT, GIVE ME A SHOT AT WINNING THAT CASE BACK?
I SAY THIS LOG IS FIREWOOD IN THIRTY SECONDS!
STACKED!
MAYBE...
STACKED?
YOU ARE ON, MY FRIEND!


WELL, LOOK AT ALL THIS LOVE AND CAMARADERIE.
SO YOU CARE ABOUT THESE GUYS, LADY FRIEND?
THAT'S THE EDGE I NEEDED...
...AND ELEVEN...
...AND TWELVE...

BA-KOOM!

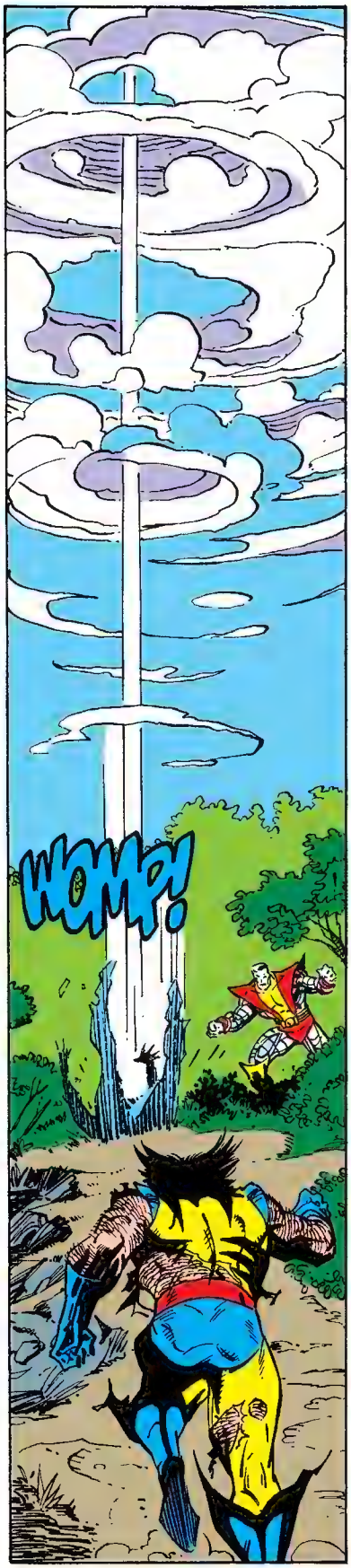
I THOUGHT I SMELLED SOMETHING!
IT IS THAT MAN WHO BOTHERED ME IN THE CITY TODAY!
YOU KNOW THIS GUY?

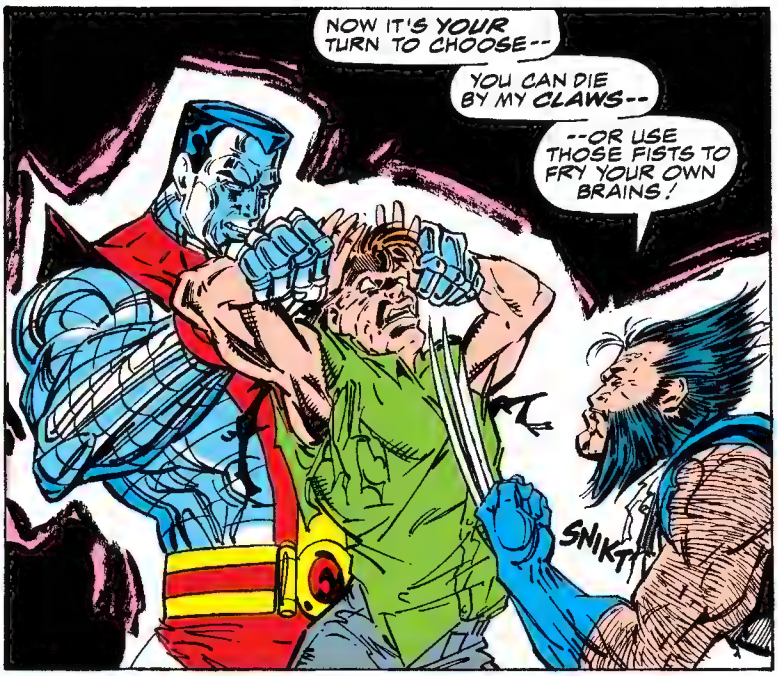
NOBODY MOVE!
I COULD DISINTEGRATE ANY OF YOU IN A HEARTBEAT!
BUT I'M ONLY GOING TO KILL ONE!
OKAY, LADY FRIEND-- YOU CHOOSE! IT SHOULD BE EASY, YOU'RE USED TO CHOOSING BE-TWEEN MEN!
ONE OF YOUR PALS LIVES, THE OTHER DIES!
BUT YOU CHOOSE!
YOU HAVE FIVE SECONDS, CHOOSE, AND LIVE WITH YOUR CHOICE, THE REST OF YOUR LIFE!
CHOOSE? HOW CAN I? CHOOSE WHICH FRIEND DIES? OH, BRIGHT LADY!
NONE OF US COULD REACH HIM FAST ENOUGH... THAT CAR IS DUST, NOT EVEN PETER'S ARMOR COULD SURVIVE SUCH A BLAST... NOT EVEN MY WINDS COULD TOPPLE HIM BEFORE ONE OF US IS DISINTEGRATED!
NO WAY OUT-- I HAVE TO CHOOSE!
PETER... SO SWEET, SO INNOCENT! I CAN NOT...
WOLVERINE! WHAT INSTINCT SHOULD I FOLLOW?


DO I LET THE BETTER FIGHTER SURVIVE, FOR THE SAKE OF THE X-MEN?
WHICH WOULD BEST UNDERSTAND? BE HURT LESS?
WHO IS THE BETTER MAN?
NO! THESE THOUGHTS ARE HORRID!
X-MEN DO NOT MAKE CHOICES LIKE THIS!
WOLVERINE'S LIGHTER, FASTER, THERE'S A CHANCE HE COULD DIVE AWAY AND SURVIVE SUCH A BLAST!
MAYBE I AM ISSUING HIS DEATH SENTENCE ... BUT IT IS MY ONLY CHOICE.
WOLVERINE'S LOOKING AT ME! HE KNOWS!
COME ON, DON'T BE FICKLE-- CHOOSE YOUR MAN!
I CHOOSE WOLVERINE.
WELL, GUYS-- YOU HEARD THE LADY--

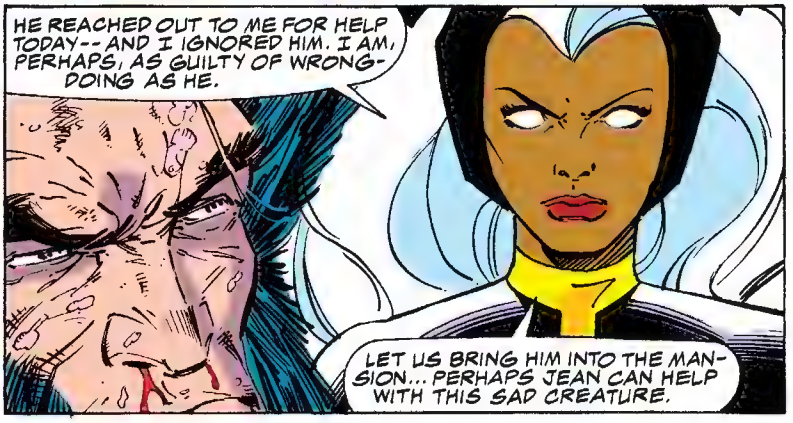
FOOOSH!
ARRRR-RRRR!
HE LEAPED AWAY! LOOKS LIKE HE NEEDS ANOTHER BLAST!

KR-KOW!
FOOOSH!
KRAK!
HE IS FIRING WILD!
WE NEED TO PIN THOSE FISTS!
JUST DROP 'IM, STORM.
RIGHT HERE.
HE'S MINE.


WOMP!


NOW IT'S YOUR TURN TO CHOOSE--
YOU CAN DIE BY MY CLAWS--
--OR USE THOSE FISTS TO FRY YOUR OWN BRAINS!
SNIKT!

WOLVERINE!
HE IS A HUMAN BEING! EVIL, PERHAPS... BUT WE DO NOT KNOW WHAT HAS MADE HIM THIS WAY.


HE REACHED OUT TO ME FOR HELP TODAY--AND I IGNORED HIM. I AM, PERHAPS, AS GUILTY OF WRONG-DOING AS HE.
LET US BRING HIM INTO THE MANSION... PERHAPS JEAN CAN HELP WITH THIS SAD CREATURE.

RIGHT.
JUST GET HIM OUTTA MY FACE, COLOSSUS, BEFORE I CHANGE MY MIND.
SNAKT
SNAKT
LOGAN--YOU DO UNDERSTAND? WHY I HAD TO CHOOSE YOU?
YEAH, YEAH.
GOOD CHOICE.
LOGAN...?
FORGET IT!
I'M GONNA GO GET A BEER.
STORM? ARE YOU ALL RIGHT?
LOOKS LIKE I WON, LADY FRIEND!
END

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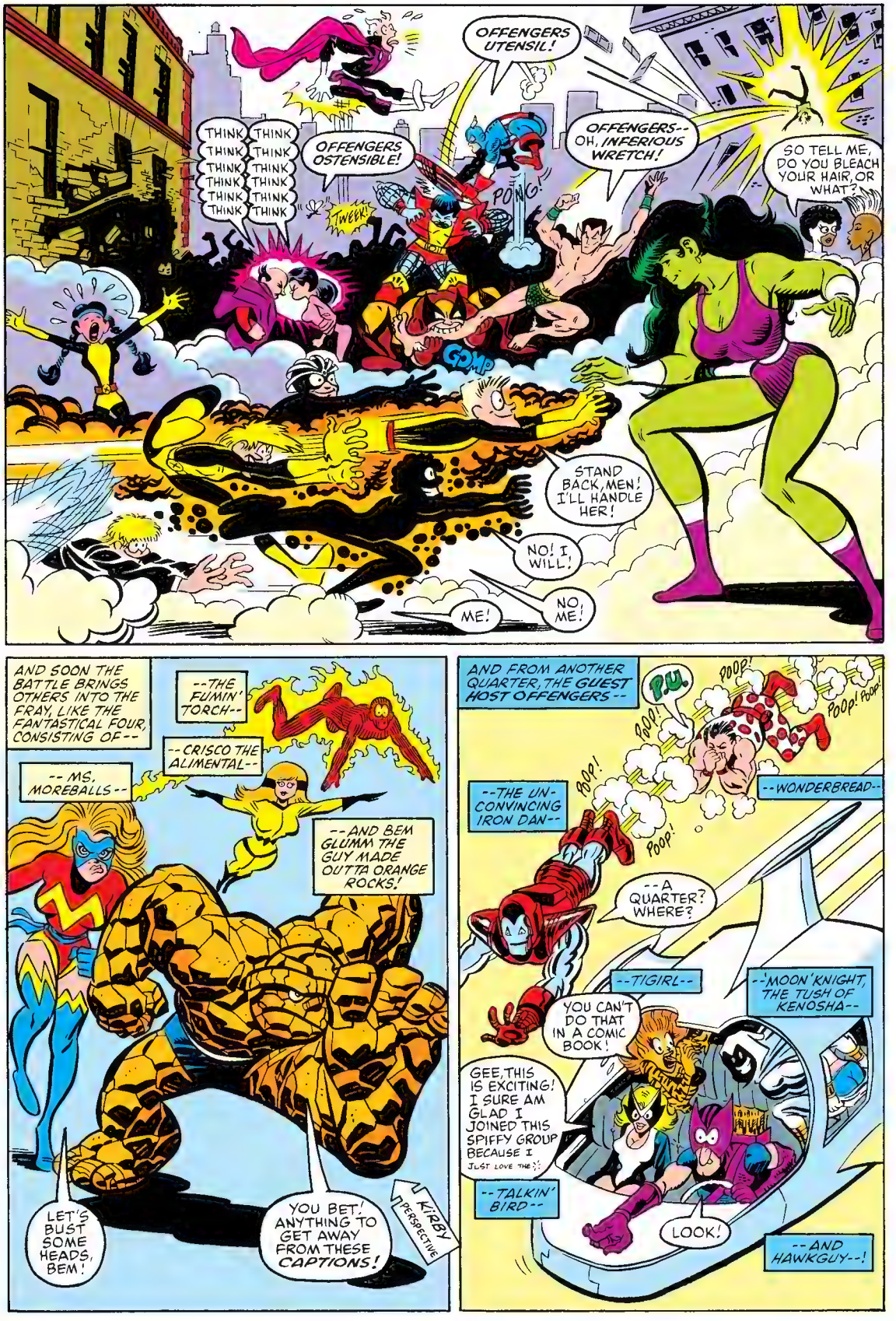
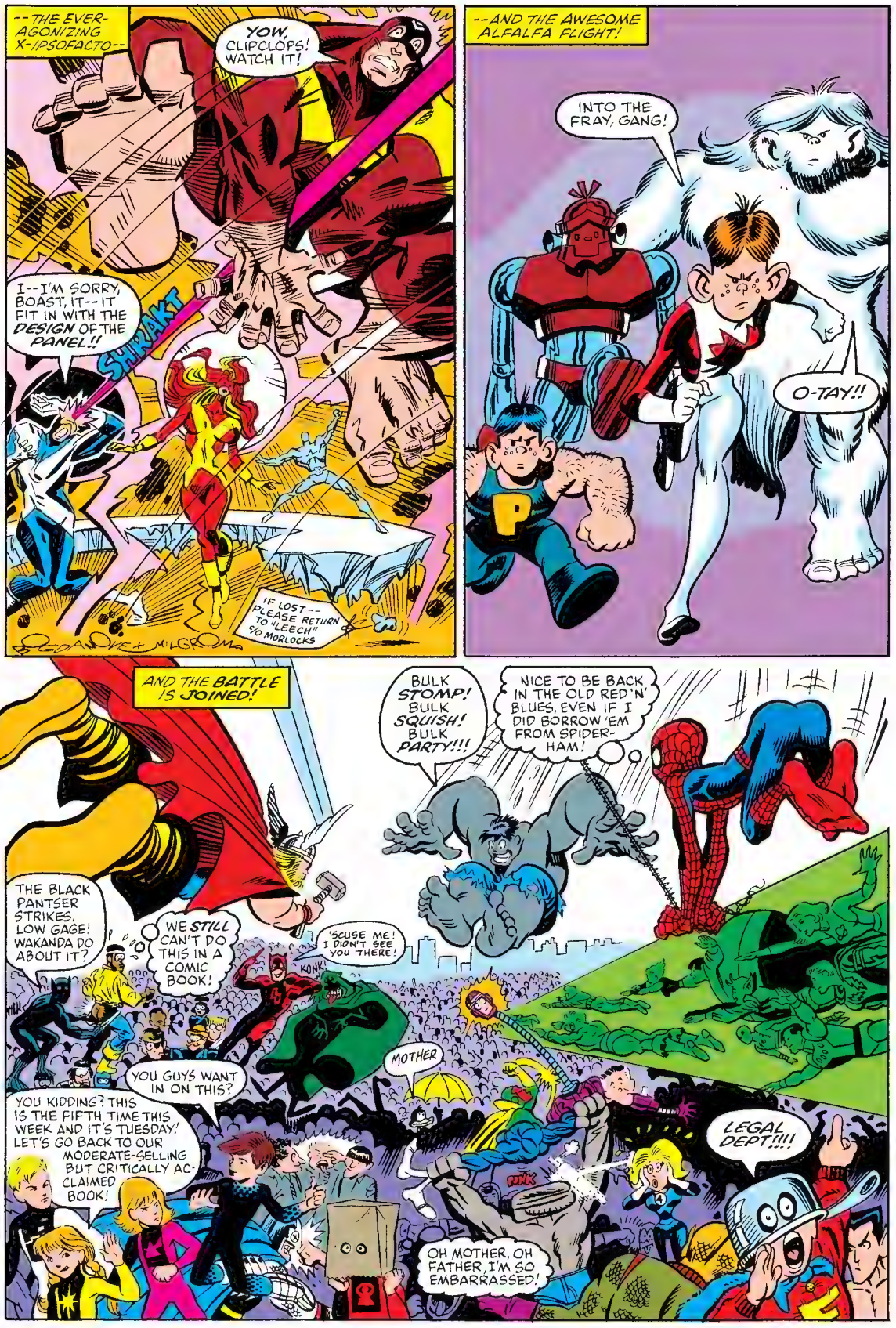
02112
APPROVED BY THE COMICS CODE
AUTHORITY
THE MARVEL® MAG OF MIRTH AND MAYHEM!
WHAT THE--?!
TM
THE USUAL BATTLE OF THE CENTURY...
...WHEN TITANS TUSSLE!
FORGET IT, BUB--WE'RE ON OUR BREAK!
HONEY GRAHAM CRACKERS
UNION RULES DONCHEW KNOW.
BOGDANOVE & MILGROM
MARSHMALLOWS "THEY'RE JET-PUFFED"
S'MORE ACTION THAN YOU CAN STAND!

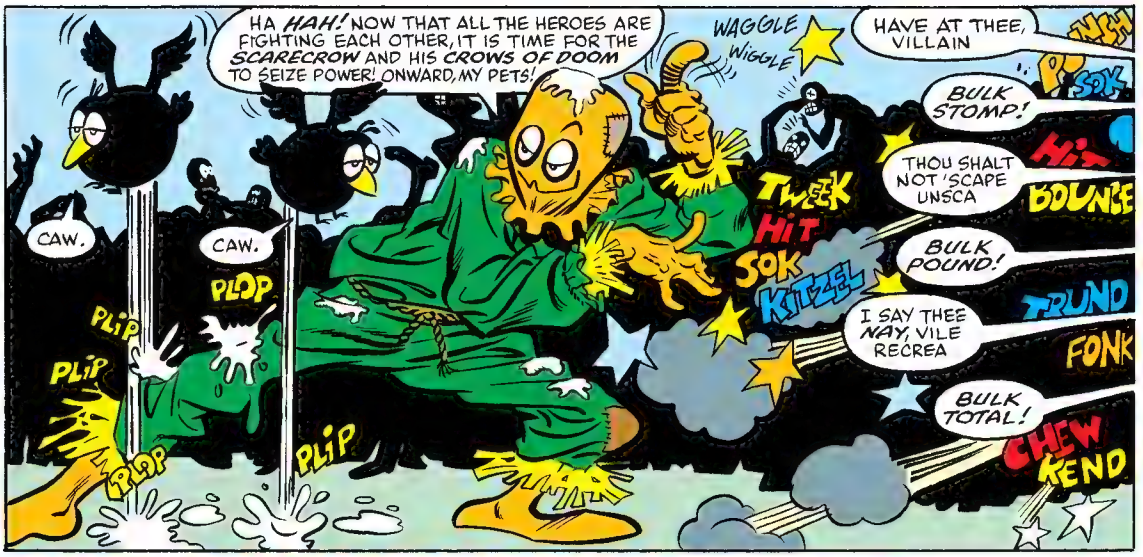
Stan Lee presents: THE UNNECESSARY X-PERSONS AND THE NEW PUBESCENTS IN THE STORY WE TRIED HARD NOT TO CALL--
"WHEN TITANS BUNCH!"
THE SCENE: THE WORLD FAMOUS DINGY ROOM, WHERE THE WORLD FAMOUS X-PERSONS GO THROUGH THEIR TRAINING FACES!
L.L.BEAN
BOING
FOOP!
WATCH IT, SAM'N'BALL! I'M DOIN' WHAT I DO BEST--AND IT AIN'T PRETTY!
MAYBE I COULD STILL GET A JOB AS A CYCLOTRON SOMEWHERE...!
BY THE BRIGHT LADY, YOU AREN'T TAKING THIS SERI--OOOF!
ZONK
EIVEN
YOU OKAY, PEWTER?
BEARING UP, COMRADE SOME-SPOTS! HOW'BOUT YOU, VOGUE?
HAK
THE FIZZLER'S THE BRIGHTEST LADY HERE, ORORORORO--AND SHE'S PLAYIN' IT COOL!
IT SMELLS PRETTY BAD TOO, WULVOREAM!
AH'M FINE--BUT AH'VE JUST AB-SORBED YOUR FEET'S MEMO-RIES, MOLAS-SUS--AN' THEY GOT CORNS!
SLLAT
THIS BIT OF BALONEY
AND CHEESY HUMOR
IS BROUGHT BY TO YOU BY PETER GILLIS / WOODS AND JON BOGDANOVE AND AL MILGROM / OTT JOE ROSEN / GREG WRIGHT / LEDDEHS CARL POTTS / TWO CENTS IN TOM DERAGO AND BOUSE
COOL, SHMOOL! WOLFSTAIN SMELLS LUNCH!

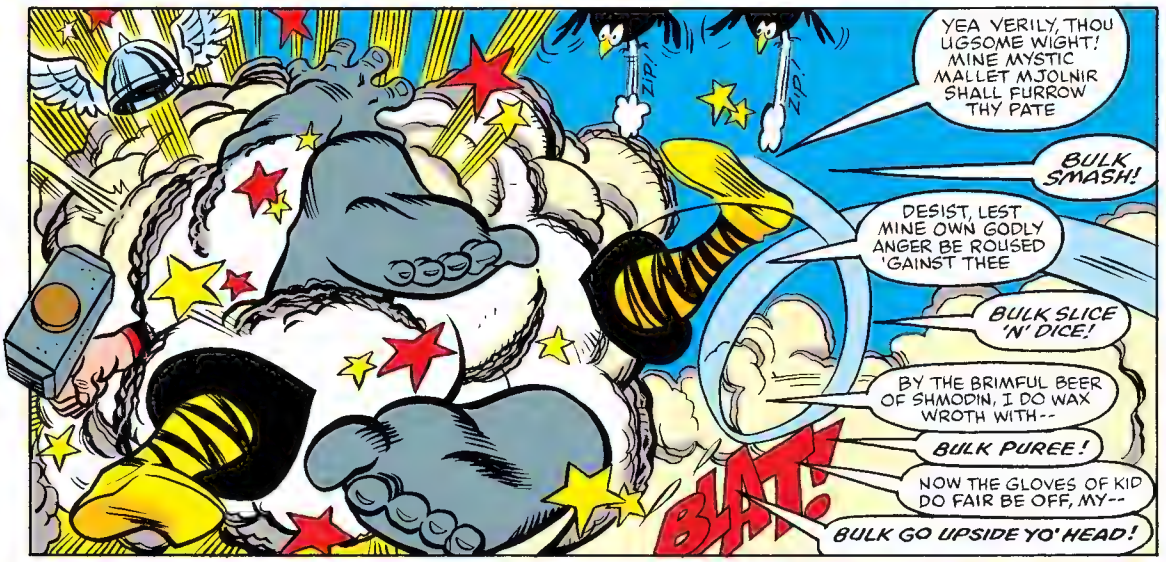
HOW CAN I, SIGH-FOR, WHOSE POWER IS ONLY TO DETECT OVER-WRITING IN ANY LANGUAGE, FEEL A PART OF THE TEAM, LET ALONE COMPETE WITH THEM?
MAG-NEEE-TO!!
SLUG'S HAVING HIS ANGUISHED THOUGHT BALLOON WHILE WE'RE STILL FIGHTING!
ACTUALLY, THAT'S NOT A BAD IDEA, SMEGMA!
OK, EVERYONE-- HAVE YOUR CONFLICTS NOW!
MAGNEETO? ISN'T IT PRO-NOUNCED MAGNEHTO?
NO, NO! IT'S MAGNAYTO!
NO! MAG-NUTTO.
MAGNOUGAT?
MCNUGGET?
SNOOKUMS?
...EVER KNOW THE AGONY...
...PART OF THE GROUP...
...TORMENT I FEEL...
...POWERS...
...DARK SIDE COMES OUT...
...HER I LOVE...
...PSORIASIS...
I LIKE THIS! I'M GOING TO FEEL RIGHT AT HOME IN THIS STRIP!
FOINK!
HOLD! I, BIPSYCLE-LOCKE, HAVE RECEIVED A PSYCHIC MESSAGE THAT THE OFFENGERS HAVE BEEN TAKEN OVER BY THE PUPPET MISTER AND ARE BENT ON EVIL! WE MUST STOP THEM!
BUT WAIT! THE OFFENGERS HAVE ALWAYS BEEN ON THE SIDE OF GOOD! YOUR MESSAGE MIGHT BE A TRAP!
ORORORORO IS RIGHT! I MUST PONDER THE COSMIC IMPLI-CATIONS OF SUCH A DRASTIC ACT!
FLIP
SO BE IT! FORWARD! ONWARD! TWO DOORS DOWN AND TO THE LEFT!
HEY, BOSS! HOWCUM YER HAND GOT BIG LIKE THAT, HUH?
HMM. BIG JACK AT-TACK--?

NOT TOO VERY MUCH LATER AT ALL, AT THE OFFENGERS MANSION--
OOH! HAVE I, DR DROOLID, GOT A MENTAL MESSAGE FOR YOUSE GUYS THOSE X-PEOPLE ARE ABOUT TO ATTACK US, UNDER A SPELL LIKE YOU WOULDN'T BELIEVE!
BUT THAT'S NUTS! THEY'RE GOOD GUYS!
NONETHELESS, THE OFFENGERS STAND EVER READY! THEY WILL NOT FIND UNPREPARED SUCH HEROES AS--
-- CAPTAIN MARVIN!
I'M A GIRL, DARN IT!
--THE BLANK KNIGHT!
--THE SHE-BULK!
CRUMBLE
THEY WILL NOT DARE FIGHT US, CHAPLAIN AMERICA!
OH, YASS!
ANYBODY NOTICE THE ROOF?
SO SAYS PRINCE NO-MORE, THE--
BUSCEMA CHEEK BONES
WHAM-O
FRISBEE
KRUMP
KNOCK KNOCK!
HIYA KIDS! HIYA HIYA!
WUF SLOBBER SCHNORT!
OF COURSE YOU KNOW THIS MEANS WAR!
MOOTANTS IS DA CRAZIEST PIPPLES!
BOOF
BONK
PUNCH
HIT
SOK
POOP
CHOMP
SLAM!
PUNK!
SQUONCH
PUNT
TRUND
POW
BIF
FRIK & FRAK
BOFFO
PUNCH
FUK
TWEEK
HONK
TROUNCE
BIP
PAF
PAF
BOING
THUMP
SQUELCH
ZONK!
PUNCH
HIT
BOP
SOK
HONK
SLURP
KONK
ETC
THIS BLOCK SCHEDULED FOR DEMOLITION ANYWAY
POST NO BILLS
SPITE QUIET ZONE
AVENGERS MANSION
CONVENIENTLY UNINHABITED BUILDING
ETC
ETC

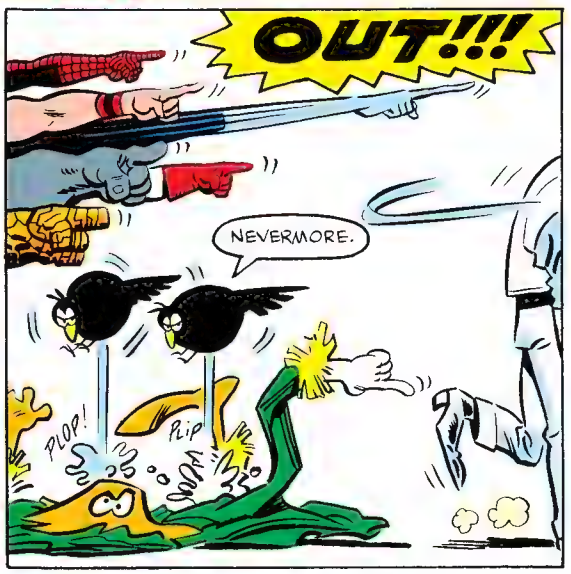

OFFENGERS UTENSIL!
OFFENGERS OSTENSIBLE!
OFFENGERS--OH, INFERIOUS WRETCH!
SO TELL ME, DO YOU BLEACH YOUR HAIR, OR WHAT?
THINK THINK
TWEEK!
PONG!
GOMP
STAND BACK, MEN! I'LL HANDLE HER!
NO! I WILL!
ME!
NO, ME!
AND SOON THE BATTLE BRINGS OTHERS INTO THE FRAY, LIKE THE FANTASTICAL FOUR, CONSISTING OF--
--THE FUMIN' TORCH--
--CRISCO THE ALIMENTAL--
--MS. MOREBALLS--
--AND BEM GLUMM THE GUY MADE OUTTA ORANGE ROCKS!
LET'S BUST SOME HEADS, BEM!
YOU BET! ANYTHING TO GET AWAY FROM THESE CAPTIONS!
KIRBY PERSPECTIVE
AND FROM ANOTHER QUARTER, THE GUEST HOST OFFENGERS--
P.U.
POOP!
--WONDERBREAD--
--THE UN-CONVINCING IRON DAN--
--A QUARTER? WHERE?
--TIGIRL--
--'MOON'KNIGHT, THE TUSH OF KENOSHA--
YOU CAN'T DO THAT IN A COMIC BOOK!
GEE, THIS IS EXCITING! I SURE AM GLAD I JOINED THIS SPIFFY GROUP BECAUSE I JUST LOVE THE--
--TALKIN' BIRD--
LOOK!
--AND HAWKGUY--!


--THE EVER-AGONIZING X-IPSOFACTO--
YOW, CLIPCLOPS! WATCH IT!
I--I'M SORRY, BOAST, IT--IT FIT IN WITH THE DESIGN OF THE PANEL!!
SHRAKT
IF LOST--- PLEASE RETURN TO "LEECH" C/O MORLOCKS
--AND THE AWESOME ALFALFA FLIGHT!
INTO THE FRAY, GANG!
O-TAY!!
P
AND THE BATTLE IS JOINED!
BULK STOMP! BULK SQUISH! BULK PARTY!!!
NICE TO BE BACK IN THE OLD RED 'N' BLUES, EVEN IF I DID BORROW 'EM FROM SPIDER-HAM!
THE BLACK PANTSER STRIKES, LOW GAGE! WAKANDA DO ABOUT IT?
WE STILL CAN'T DO THIS IN A COMIC BOOK!
'SCUSE ME! I DIDN'T SEE YOU THERE!
KONK!
MOTHER
YOU GUYS WANT IN ON THIS?
YOU KIDDING? THIS IS THE FIFTH TIME THIS WEEK AND IT'S TUESDAY! LET'S GO BACK TO OUR MODERATE-SELLING BUT CRITICALLY ACCLAIMED BOOK!
LEGAL DEPT!!!!
OH MOTHER, OH FATHER, I'M SO EMBARRASSED!


HA HAH! NOW THAT ALL THE HEROES ARE FIGHTING EACH OTHER, IT IS TIME FOR THE SCARECROW AND HIS CROWS OF DOOM TO SEIZE POWER! ONWARD, MY PETS!
CAW.
CAW.
PLOP
PLIP
PLIP
PLOP
PLIP
WAGGLE
WIGGLE
TWEEK
HIT
SOK
KITZEL
HAVE AT THEE, VILLAIN
BULK STOMP!
THOU SHALT NOT 'SCAPE UNSCA
BULK POUND!
I SAY THEE NAY, VILE RECREA
BULK TOTAL!
SOK
BOUNCE
TRUND
FONK
CHEW
FEND


ZIP!
ZIP!
YEA VERILY, THOU UGSOME WIGHT! MINE MYSTIC MALLET MJOLNIR SHALL FURROW THY PATE
BULK SMASH!
DESIST, LEST MINE OWN GODLY ANGER BE ROUSED 'GAINST THEE
BULK SLICE 'N' DICE!
BY THE BRIMFUL BEER OF SHMODIN, I DO WAX WROTH WITH--
BULK PUREE!
NOW THE GLOVES OF KID DO FAIR BE OFF, MY--
BULK GO UPSIDE YO' HEAD!
BLAT!

EXCUSE ME. I'M LOOKING FOR SECRET WARS III. IS THIS IT?
CAW.
CAW.
PLIP!
OOG.
PLOP!

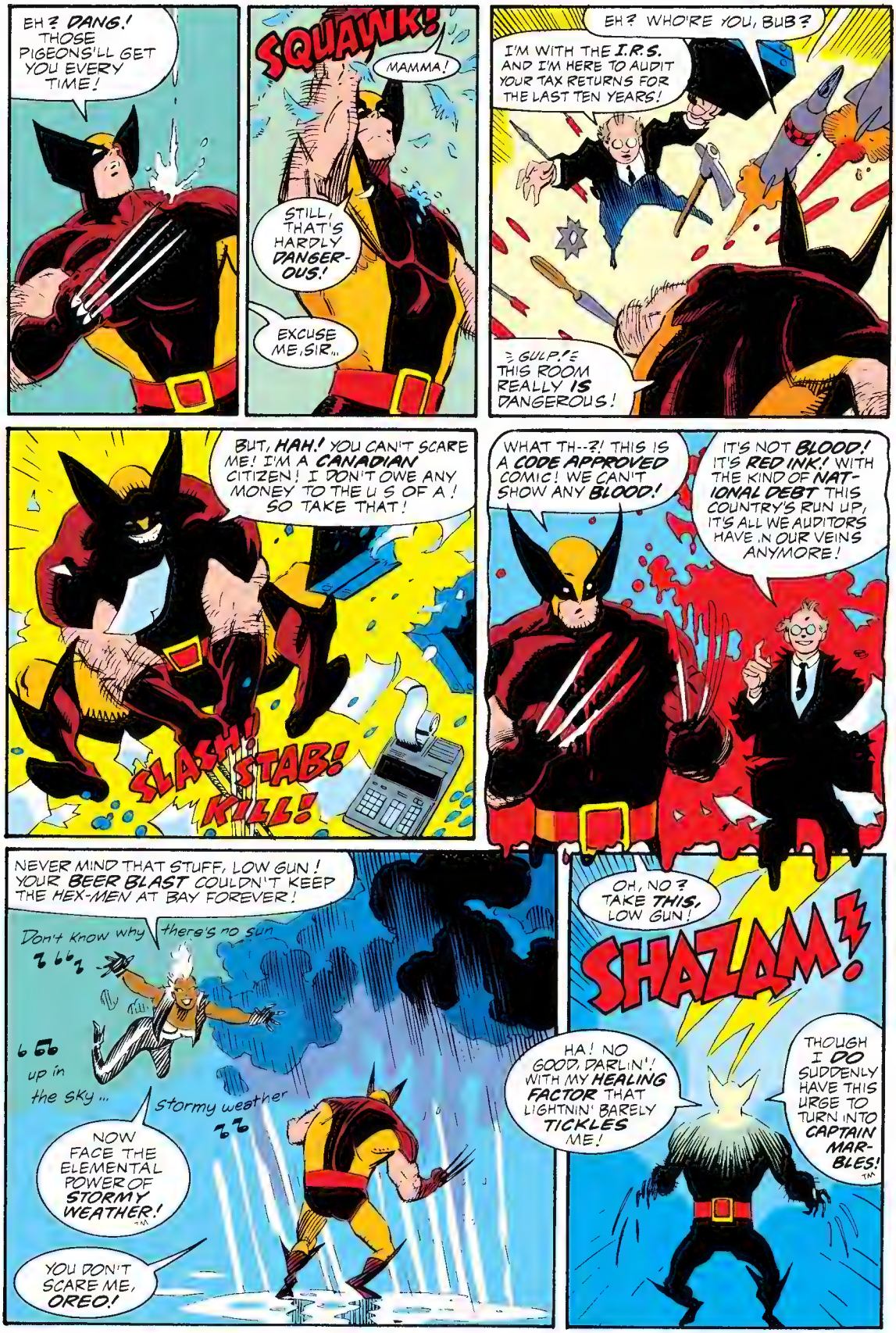

OUT!!!
NEVERMORE.
PLOP!
PLIP

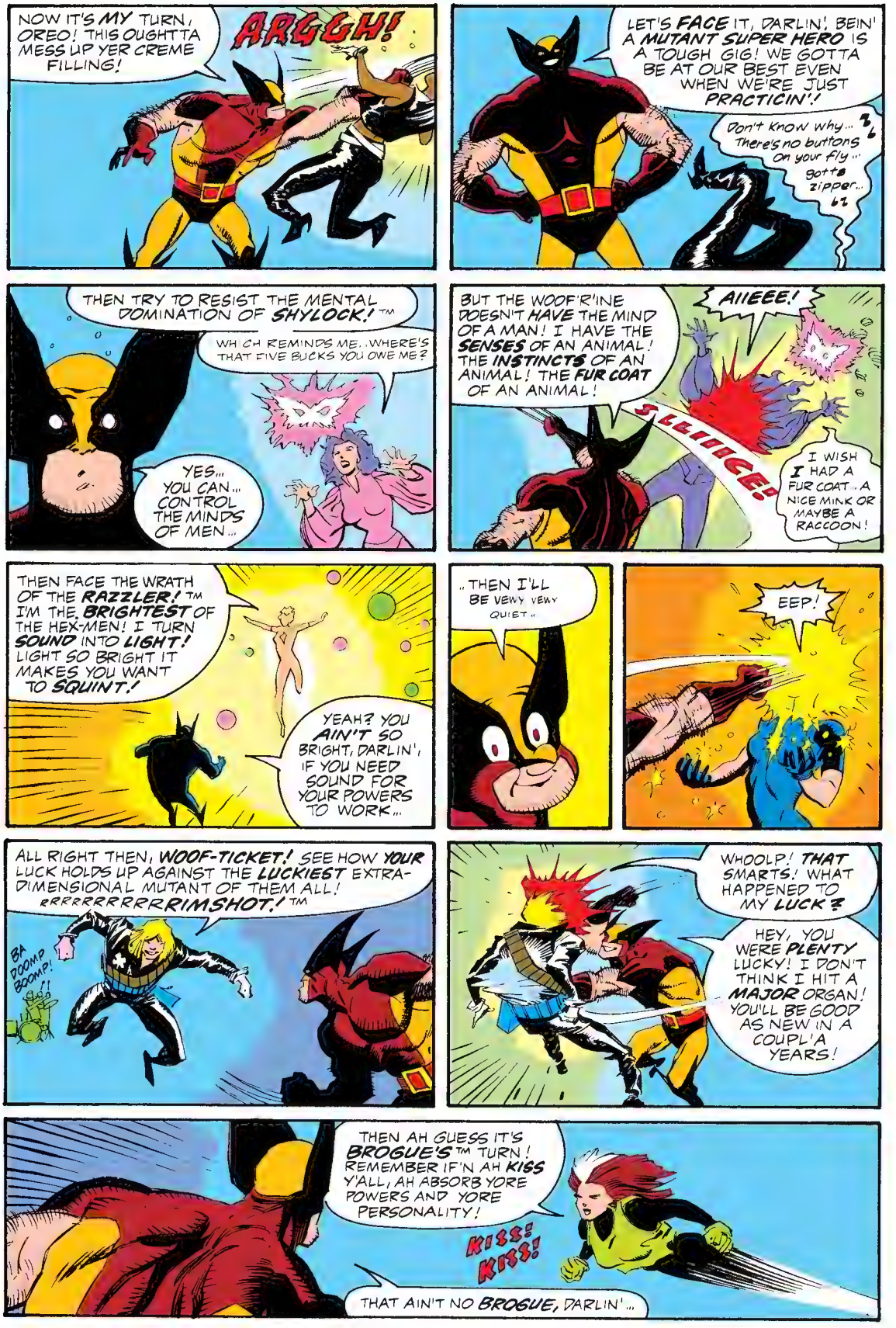
STOP! IT'S WRONG TO FIGHT AMONG OURSELVES! WE ARE ALL HEROES-- IT'S SHEER MAD STUPIDITY THAT WE SHOULD RESOLVE THE SITUATION THIS WAY!
DUH--SEEMED KINDA LOGICAL TA ME...!
TWEET!
KLONG
YOU MEAN-- ACTUALLY TALK AND LISTEN TO EACH OTHER??
TO SOLVE OUR DIFFERENCES BY REASON AND DIALOGUE??
NOT TO BASH PEOPLE AND PROPERTY UP UNNECESSARILY??
SPOIT!
WHAM
MILLER
Y = ROYALTIES
.01 / X = SALES
TAK TAK!!! TAK
NAH!
AND SO THE BATTLE RESUMES, GROWING IN INTENSITY, REACHING NEW HEIGHTS OF SENSES-SHATTERING STULTIFYING COMPLEXITY WHEN, STARTLINGLY, UNEXPECTEDLY--
HONK
BLOP
SLOP
THWIP
SMUSH
BIF
BOINK
CRACKATOMB
PUNCH
GOINK
SRONK
FIZBIM
BONK
SOK
HIT
POKE
WHIMP
WAGGLE
BAMF
ZOMP
STOMP
WHOM
POOM
LE PEW LE SQONK LE POLECAT
--THE ARTIST KEELS OVER OF A HEART ATTACK.
UT!
MORAL:
TEAM BOOKS KILL

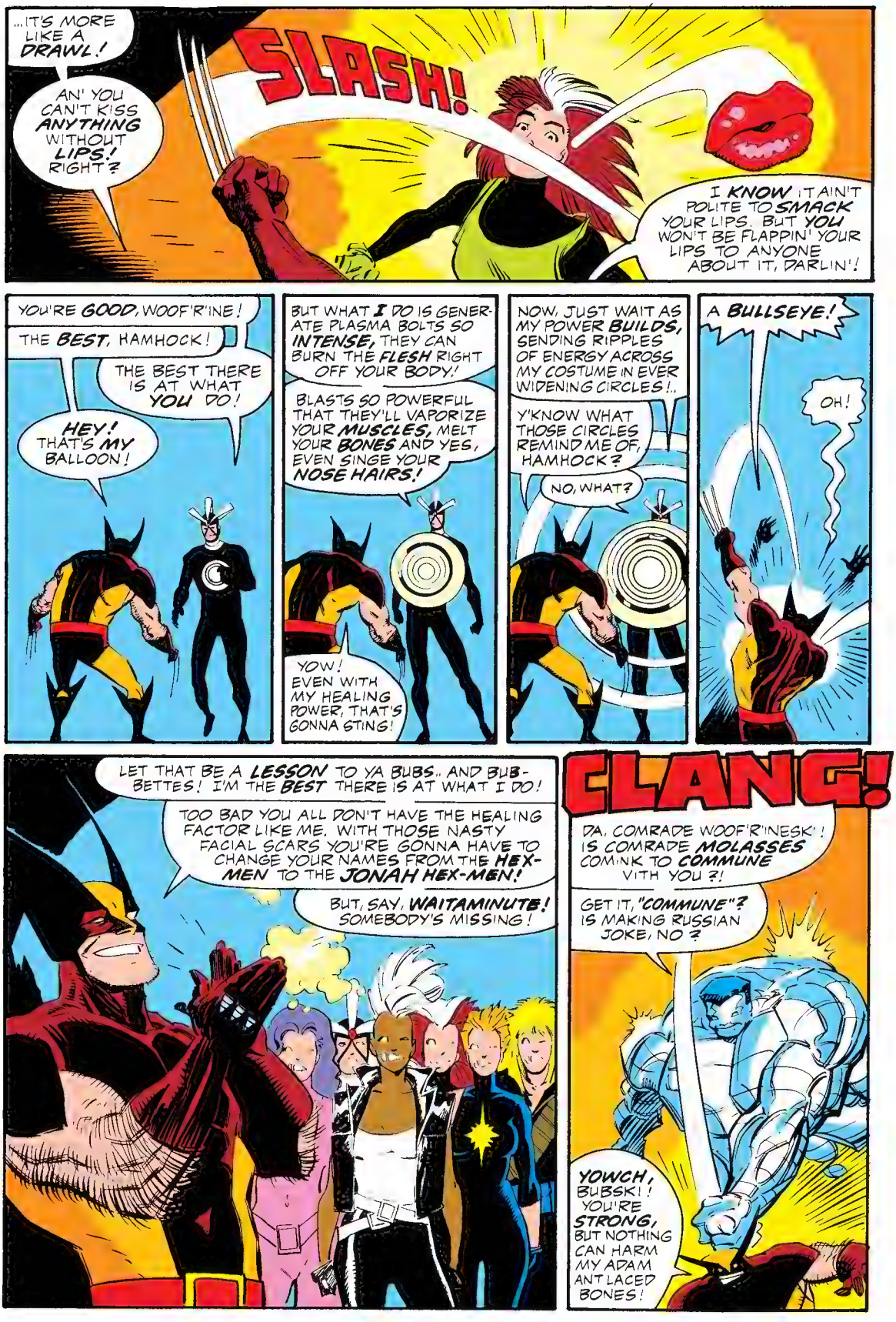
I GOT THESE CLAWS, SEE...
SNIKT!
MADE OF ADAMANT STEEL, TOUGHEST KA-KA ON EARTH...
SNIKT!
SNIKT!
MY ENTIRE SKELETON'S LACED WITH THE SAME STUFF! MAKES ME A TOUGH GUY IN A SCRAP!
SNIKT! SNAKT! SNIKKITY SNAKKITY SNUKT SNIKT! SNOKT!
I'M A MUTANT, TH' NAME'S LOW GUN, BUT...
THEY CALL ME...
WOOF'R'EAM!
TM
APPROVED BY THE COMICS CODE AUTHORITY
I'M THE BEST THERE IS AT WHAT I DO...
AND WHAT I DO ISN'T VERY NICE...
SAVAGE STORY BY AL MILGROM
PUGNACIOUS PENCILS BY MIKE MIGNOLA
FERAL FINISHES BY AL WILLIAMSON
LUSTY LETTERING BY PHIL FELIX
CARNIVOROUS COLORING BY PETRA SCOTESE
I BRAKE FOR MUTIES!
BODY BY BRECK

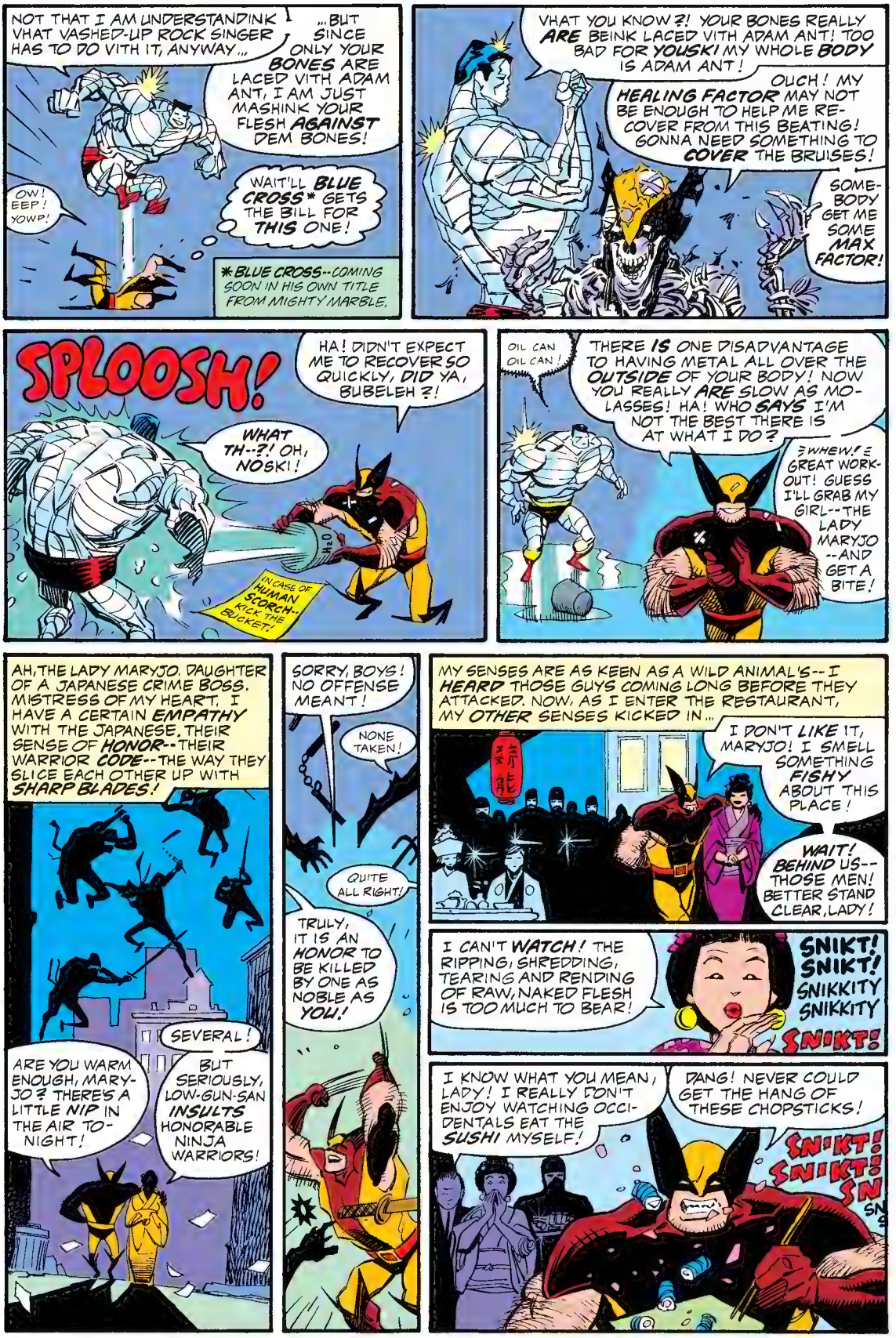
NO, WHAT I DO IS DECIDEDLY UNPLEASANT...
DOWNRIGHT NASTY, IN FACT...
REALLY, REPUGNANT BEYOND MEASURE...
LOWEST OF THE LOW... VILEST OF THE VILE...
SCRIIITTTCCHH!
IN FACT, WHAT I DO IS SO NOT NICE IT REALLY MAKES ME WANNA...
BRRR
WHEW! I FEEL BETTER ALREADY! THANKS TO MY MUTANT HEALING FACTOR.
GUESS I'LL MEET THE OTHER MEMBERS OF THE HEX-MEN IN OUR DANGEROUS ROOM!
HAVE TO WORK OUT HERE TO STAY SHARP!
DANGEROUS ROOM
KEEP OUT!
GO 'WAY!
UH-OH! WE MEAN IT!
MUTANTS BEWARE!
ABANDON HOPE, ALL YE WHO ENTER HERE!
Verboten!
YIELD
DIP IN ROAD
WITH STUPID!
BEIN' A MUTANT AND SAVIN' THE WORLD EVERY THIRD WEEK CAN BE MIGHTY RISKY BUSINESS!
NO, TOM CRUISE IS NOT A HEX-MAN!
POST NO BILLS
DANGEROUS ROOM
"NOW YOU'VE DONE IT!"
We Warned You!
DEAD END!
LEVINSKY'S FUNERAL PARLOR
WE GIVE DISCOUNTS TO MUTANTS!
ASK ABOUT OUR GROUP BURIAL PLANS
REALLY BIG MISTAKE!
WATCH YOUR STEP!

SO, LOW GUN, YOU SHOW UP AT LAST! AS PART OF YOUR HEXERCISE TODAY, YOU MUST FIGHT YOUR FELLOW HEX-MEN! DEFEND YOURSELF!
DANGER! DANGER!
LROKE
YOU KNOW MY QUASI-MOTTO, DARLIN': THE BEST DEFENSE IS A GOOD OFFENSE...
GLUG
SLURP!
GLUG
GLUG GLUG
GLUGGITY
GULP!
GRRREPS!
AN' WHEN I PUT MY MIND TO IT, AIN'T NO-BODY MORE OF-FENSIVE THAN THE WOOF'R'EAM!
WHAT A BELCH!
GASP!
UGH!
GULP!
YECCH!
NOW THAT I'VE RE-PULSED THE HEX-MEN (IN MORE WAYS THAN ONE) LET'S SEE WHAT THE DANGEROUS ROOM HAS TO OFFER!
HA! MISSED! MISSED! MISSED! THEY CALL THIS DANGEROUS?


EH? DANG! THOSE PIGEONS'LL GET YOU EVERY TIME!
SQUAWK!
MAMMA!
STILL, THAT'S HARDLY DANGER-OUS!
EXCUSE ME, SIR...
EH? WHO'RE YOU, BUB?
I'M WITH THE I.R.S. AND I'M HERE TO AUDIT YOUR TAX RETURNS FOR THE LAST TEN YEARS!
GULP! THIS ROOM REALLY IS DANGEROUS!
BUT, HAH! YOU CAN'T SCARE ME! I'M A CANADIAN CITIZEN! I DON'T OWE ANY MONEY TO THE U S OF A! SO TAKE THAT!
SLASH! STAB! KILL!
WHAT TH--?! THIS IS A CODE APPROVED COMIC! WE CAN'T SHOW ANY BLOOD!
IT'S NOT BLOOD! IT'S RED INK! WITH THE KIND OF NAT-IONAL DEBT THIS COUNTRY'S RUN UP, IT'S ALL WE AUDITORS HAVE IN OUR VEINS ANYMORE!
NEVER MIND THAT STUFF, LOW GUN! YOUR BEER BLAST COULDN'T KEEP THE HEX-MEN AT BAY FOREVER!
Don't know why there's no sun up in the sky...
stormy weather
NOW FACE THE ELEMENTAL POWER OF STORMY WEATHER! ™
YOU DON'T SCARE ME, OREO!
OH, NO? TAKE THIS, LOW GUN!
SHAZAM!
HA! NO GOOD, DARLIN'! WITH MY HEALING FACTOR THAT LIGHTNIN' BARELY TICKLES ME!
THOUGH I DO SUDDENLY HAVE THIS URGE TO TURN INTO CAPTAIN MAR-BLES! ™


NOW IT'S MY TURN, OREO! THIS OUGHTTA MESS UP YER CREME FILLING!
ARGGH!
LET'S FACE IT, DARLIN', BEIN' A MUTANT SUPER HERO IS A TOUGH GIG! WE GOTTA BE AT OUR BEST EVEN WHEN WE'RE JUST PRACTICIN'!
Don't know why... There's no buttons on your fly... got a zipper...
THEN TRY TO RESIST THE MENTAL DOMINATION OF SHYLOCK! ™
WHICH REMINDS ME... WHERE'S THAT FIVE BUCKS YOU OWE ME?
YES... YOU CAN... CONTROL THE MINDS OF MEN...
BUT THE WOOF'R'INE DOESN'T HAVE THE MIND OF A MAN! I HAVE THE SENSES OF AN ANIMAL! THE INSTINCTS OF AN ANIMAL! THE FUR COAT OF AN ANIMAL!
AIIEEE!
SLEUUCE!
I WISH I HAD A FUR COAT... A NICE MINK OR MAYBE A RACCOON!
THEN FACE THE WRATH OF THE RAZZLER! ™ I'M THE BRIGHTEST OF THE HEX-MEN! I TURN SOUND INTO LIGHT! LIGHT SO BRIGHT IT MAKES YOU WANT TO SQUINT!
YEAH? YOU AIN'T SO BRIGHT, DARLIN', IF YOU NEED SOUND FOR YOUR POWERS TO WORK...
..THEN I'LL BE VEWY VEWY QUIET..
EEP!
ALL RIGHT THEN, WOOF-TICKET! SEE HOW YOUR LUCK HOLDS UP AGAINST THE LUCKIEST EXTRA-DIMENSIONAL MUTANT OF THEM ALL! RRRRRRRRRRIMSHOT! ™
BA DOOMP BOOMP!
WHOOLP! THAT SMARTS! WHAT HAPPENED TO MY LUCK?
HEY, YOU WERE PLENTY LUCKY! I DON'T THINK I HIT A MAJOR ORGAN! YOU'LL BE GOOD AS NEW IN A COUPL'A YEARS!
THEN AH GUESS IT'S BROGUE'S ™ TURN! REMEMBER IF'N AH KISS Y'ALL, AH ABSORB YORE POWERS AND YORE PERSONALITY!
KISS! KISS!
THAT AIN'T NO BROGUE, DARLIN'...


...IT'S MORE LIKE A DRAWL!
AN' YOU CAN'T KISS ANYTHING WITHOUT LIPS! RIGHT?
SLASH!
I KNOW IT AIN'T POLITE TO SMACK YOUR LIPS. BUT YOU WON'T BE FLAPPIN' YOUR LIPS TO ANYONE ABOUT IT, DARLIN'!
YOU'RE GOOD, WOOF'R'INE!
THE BEST, HAMHOCK!
THE BEST THERE IS AT WHAT YOU DO!
HEY! THAT'S MY BALLOON!
BUT WHAT I DO IS GENERATE PLASMA BOLTS SO INTENSE, THEY CAN BURN THE FLESH RIGHT OFF YOUR BODY!
BLASTS SO POWERFUL THAT THEY'LL VAPORIZE YOUR MUSCLES, MELT YOUR BONES AND YES, EVEN SINGE YOUR NOSE HAIRS!
YOW! EVEN WITH MY HEALING POWER, THAT'S GONNA STING!
NOW, JUST WAIT AS MY POWER BUILDS, SENDING RIPPLES OF ENERGY ACROSS MY COSTUME IN EVER WIDENING CIRCLES!..
Y'KNOW WHAT THOSE CIRCLES REMIND ME OF, HAMHOCK?
NO, WHAT?
A BULLSEYE!
OH!
LET THAT BE A LESSON TO YA BUBS.. AND BUBBETTES! I'M THE BEST THERE IS AT WHAT I DO!
TOO BAD YOU ALL DON'T HAVE THE HEALING FACTOR LIKE ME. WITH THOSE NASTY FACIAL SCARS YOU'RE GONNA HAVE TO CHANGE YOUR NAMES FROM THE HEX-MEN TO THE JONAH HEX-MEN!
BUT, SAY, WAITAMINUTE! SOMEBODY'S MISSING!
CLANG!
DA, COMRADE WOOF'R'INESK'! IS COMRADE MOLASSES COMINK TO COMMUNE VITH YOU?!
GET IT, "COMMUNE"? IS MAKING RUSSIAN JOKE, NO?
YOWCH, BUBSK! YOU'RE STRONG, BUT NOTHING CAN HARM MY ADAM ANTLACED BONES!


NOT THAT I AM UNDERSTANDINK VHAT VASHED-UP ROCK SINGER HAS TO DO VITH IT, ANYWAY...
...BUT SINCE ONLY YOUR BONES ARE LACED VITH ADAM ANT, I AM JUST MASHINK YOUR FLESH AGAINST DEM BONES!
OW! EEP! YOWP!
WAIT'LL BLUE CROSS* GETS THE BILL FOR THIS ONE!
*BLUE CROSS--COMING SOON IN HIS OWN TITLE FROM MIGHTY MARBLE.
VHAT YOU KNOW?! YOUR BONES REALLY ARE BEINK LACED VITH ADAM ANT! TOO BAD FOR YOUSKI MY WHOLE BODY IS ADAM ANT!
OUCH! MY HEALING FACTOR MAY NOT BE ENOUGH TO HELP ME RE-COVER FROM THIS BEATING! GONNA NEED SOMETHING TO COVER THE BRUISES!
SOME-BODY GET ME SOME MAX FACTOR!
SPLOOSH!
HA! DIDN'T EXPECT ME TO RECOVER SO QUICKLY, DID YA, BUBELEH?!
WHAT TH--?! OH, NOSKI!
H2O
IN CASE OF HUMAN SCORCH-- KICK THE BUCKET!
OIL CAN OIL CAN!
THERE IS ONE DISADVANTAGE TO HAVING METAL ALL OVER THE OUTSIDE OF YOUR BODY! NOW YOU REALLY ARE SLOW AS MO-LASSES! HA! WHO SAYS I'M NOT THE BEST THERE IS AT WHAT I DO?
WHEW! GREAT WORK-OUT! GUESS I'LL GRAB MY GIRL--THE LADY MARYJO --AND GET A BITE!
AH, THE LADY MARYJO. DAUGHTER OF A JAPANESE CRIME BOSS. MISTRESS OF MY HEART. I HAVE A CERTAIN EMPATHY WITH THE JAPANESE. THEIR SENSE OF HONOR--THEIR WARRIOR CODE--THE WAY THEY SLICE EACH OTHER UP WITH SHARP BLADES!
SEVERAL!
ARE YOU WARM ENOUGH, MARY-JO? THERE'S A LITTLE NIP IN THE AIR TO-NIGHT!
BUT SERIOUSLY, LOW-GUN-SAN INSULTS HONORABLE NINJA WARRIORS!
SORRY, BOYS! NO OFFENSE MEANT!
NONE TAKEN!
QUITE ALL RIGHT!
TRULY, IT IS AN HONOR TO BE KILLED BY ONE AS NOBLE AS YOU!
MY SENSES ARE AS KEEN AS A WILD ANIMAL'S--I HEARD THOSE GUYS COMING LONG BEFORE THEY ATTACKED. NOW, AS I ENTER THE RESTAURANT, MY OTHER SENSES KICKED IN...
I DON'T LIKE IT, MARYJO! I SMELL SOMETHING FISHY ABOUT THIS PLACE!
WAIT! BEHIND US--THOSE MEN! BETTER STAND CLEAR, LADY!
I CAN'T WATCH! THE RIPPING, SHREDDING, TEARING AND RENDING OF RAW, NAKED FLESH IS TOO MUCH TO BEAR!
SNIKT! SNIKT! SNIKKITY SNIKKITY SNIKT!
I KNOW WHAT YOU MEAN, LADY! I REALLY DON'T ENJOY WATCHING OCCI-DENTALS EAT THE SUSHI MYSELF!
DANG! NEVER COULD GET THE HANG OF THESE CHOPSTICKS!
SNIKT! SNIKT! SN

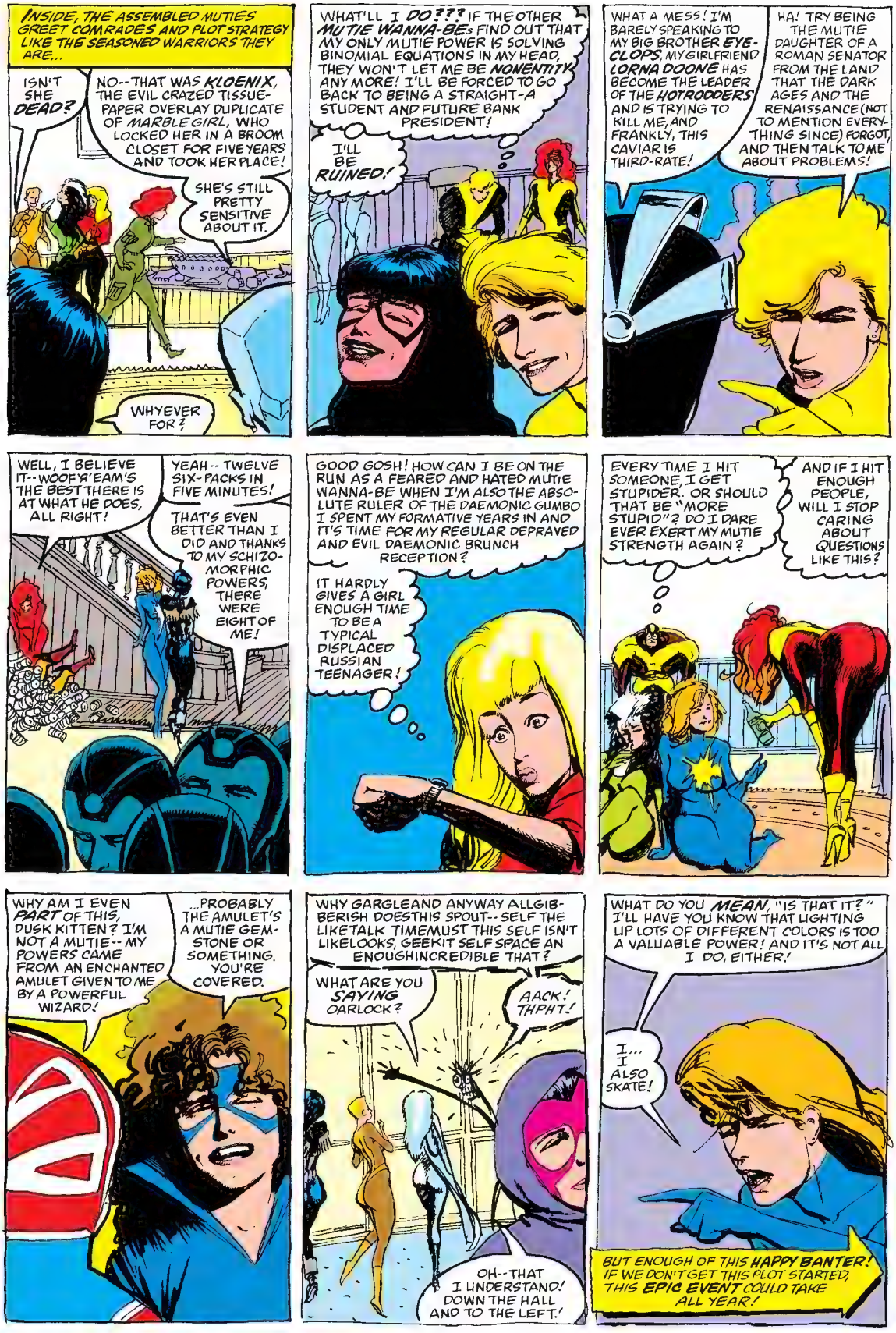
URRRP!E GOOD WORKOUT... GOOD MEAL! NOW WE'D BETTER CHANGE TO GO TO THE CLUB!
TELL ME, LOW GUN-SAN. WHY YOU WEAR SUCH A STRANGE SHAPE MASK?
HEY, BABE! YOU WORK AS HARD AS I DO TO GET YOUR HAIR IN THE RIGHT SHAPE, YOU WANNA TAKE CARE OF IT! ASK GARY SHANDLING!
?
SO TELL ME, LOW GUN-SAN -- WHY YOU WEAR SUCH STRANGE SHAPE BOOTS?
HEY, BABE! YOU WORK AS HARD AS I DO TO GET YOUR HAIR JUST SO, YOU WANNA TAKE CARE OF IT!
NOW, ENOUGH YAPPIN'! LET'S GET READY FOR THE CLUB!
HEY! THIS IS A CODE APPROVED COMIC! FIX THAT SIGN THIS VERY INSTANT!
HECK
HELLFIRE Club
WE'RE HEADING FOR THE ~~HELL-~~ HECKFIRE CLUB. HANGOUT FOR THE LOWEST, VILEST MUTANT BADDIES ON THE FACE OF THE EARTH! IT'S SOMETHING I HAVE TO DO...
I'M THE BEST AT WHAT I DO...
AND WHAT I DO ISN'T VERY NICE...
SO OKAY, WHAT I DO IS DRESS UP IN WOMEN'S UNDERWEAR...
WHAT THE HECK, EVERYBODY NEEDS A HOBBY!
OOH, WOOFY!
RAKE ME WITH THOSE CLAWS, YOU ANIMAL, YOU!
FASHIONS BY FORBUSH HOLLYWOOD
HUB-BA HUB-BA!
THE END--?!

ONE DAY IN THE COMICS SHOP
BOY! THIS PLACE IS GREAT!
I HAVEN'T READ ANY COMICS SINCE I WAS A KID!
THE DREAM FACTORY
DO THEY STILL PUBLISH AVENGERS?
SURE, WHICH ONE DO YOU WANT?
HUH?
THE PHONE RANGER
IN THIS ISH, A NEW HANG UP!
BEE-HEAD!!
WHAT'S THE BUZZ!?
ENERGY BAT
BRICK BOY
SARA DOESN'T WORK HERE ANY
WELL, YOU GOT YOUR MIGHTY AVENGERS, WHICH IS THE ORIGINAL BOOK, AND STILL HAS A COUPLE OF THE ORIGINAL AVENGERS IN IT.
THEN YOU GOT YOUR WEST COAST AVENGERS, WHICH IS THE AVENGERS ON THE WEST COAST, WITH HAWKEYE AND IRON MAN AND LIKE THAT.
SPLOTCH MEN
AVENGERS
TRAVEL
THEN YOU GOT SOLO AVENGERS, WHICH HAS TWO AVENGERS IN IT, AND--
NEVER MIND, NEVER MIND!
GIVE ME AN X-MEN INSTEAD!
SURE, WHICH ONE DO YOU WANT?
MUTANTS
X-MEN
MOO-TANT
AUGGH!
THUD!
GOOD THING HE DIDN'T ASK FOR A SPIDER-MAN...

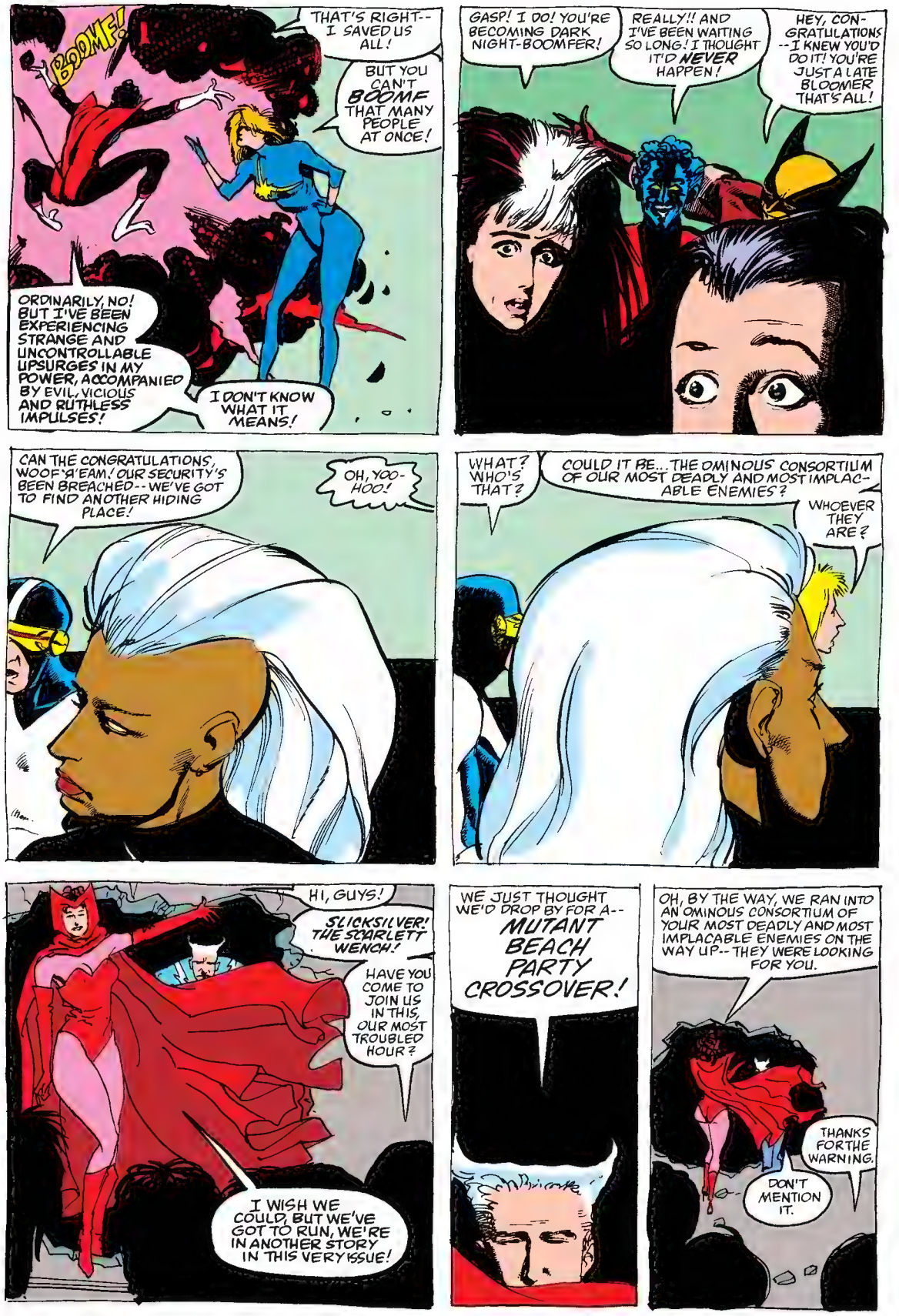
BY KURT BUSIEK, JAMES FRY, HECTOR COLLAZO, MICHAEL HEISLER, AND GREGORY WRIGHT.

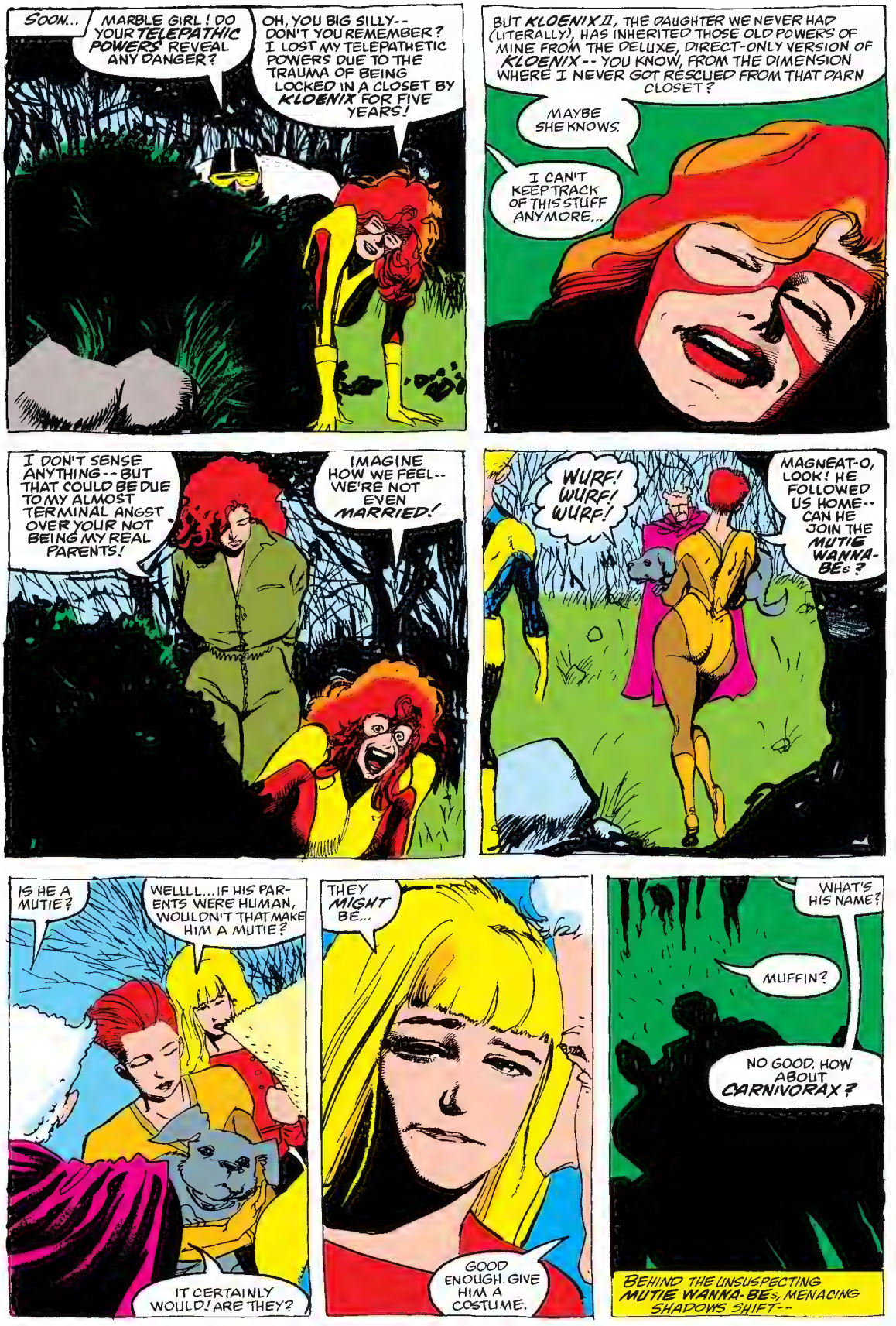
MUTANT BEACH PARTY!

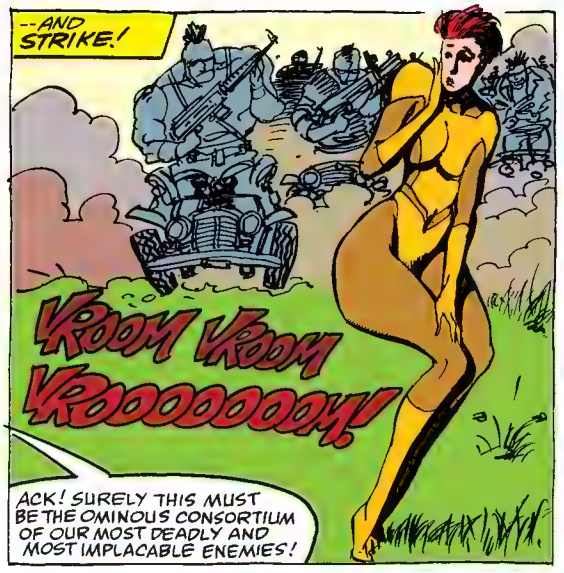
THESE ARE THE MUTIES.
BORN WITH SUPER-POWERS AND A MYSTERIOUS X-FACTOR THEY REGULARLY SAVE THE WORLD BUT ARE FEARED, HATED AND SPAT UPON BY US ORDINARY HUMANS.
THESE ARE THE MUTIE WANNA-BEs.
IF THEY WORK AND PRACTICE HARD ENOUGH, THEY'LL BE ABLE TO REGULARLY SAVE THE WORLD BUT BE FEARED, HATED AND SPAT UPON BY US ORDINARY HUMANS.!
THESE ARE THE MUTIE USEDTO-BEs.
YEARS AGO, THEY REGULARLY SAVED THE WORLD AND WERE FEARED, HATED AND SPAT UPON BY US ORDINARY HUMANS, BUT THEY RETIRED TO LEAD ORDINARY PLEASANT LIVES. THEY COULDN'T HACK THAT, AND THEY'RE ITCHING FOR A COMEBACK!
THAT'S ENOUGH INTRODUCTION-- ON WITH THE STORY!
HAVING SAVED THE WORLD THREE TIMES SINCE BREAKFAST, EARTH'S MUTIE HEROES ARE IN SECLUSION, HIDING FROM AN OMINOUS CONSORTIUM OF THEIR MOST DEADLY AND MOST IMPLACABLE ENEMIES!
BING BONG
HI! ROOM FOR ONE MORE?
KURT BUSIEK SCRIPT and KYLE BAKER ART
R. PARKER LETTERS G. WRIGHT COLORS
JIM SALICRUP EDITS
TOM DeFALCO EDITOR IN CHIEF


INSIDE, THE ASSEMBLED MUTIES GREET COMRADES AND PLOT STRATEGY LIKE THE SEASONED WARRIORS THEY ARE...
ISN'T SHE DEAD?
NO--THAT WAS KLOENIX, THE EVIL CRAZED TISSUE-PAPER OVERLAY DUPLICATE OF MARBLE GIRL, WHO LOCKED HER IN A BROOM CLOSET FOR FIVE YEARS AND TOOK HER PLACE!
SHE'S STILL PRETTY SENSITIVE ABOUT IT.
WHYEVER FOR?
WHAT'LL I DO??? IF THE OTHER MUTIE WANNA-BEs FIND OUT THAT MY ONLY MUTIE POWER IS SOLVING BINOMIAL EQUATIONS IN MY HEAD, THEY WON'T LET ME BE NONENTITY ANY MORE! I'LL BE FORCED TO GO BACK TO BEING A STRAIGHT-A STUDENT AND FUTURE BANK PRESIDENT!
I'LL BE RUINED!
WHAT A MESS! I'M BARELY SPEAKING TO MY BIG BROTHER EYE-CLOPS, MY GIRLFRIEND LORNA DOONE HAS BECOME THE LEADER OF THE HOTRODDERS AND IS TRYING TO KILL ME, AND FRANKLY, THIS CAVIAR IS THIRD-RATE!
HA! TRY BEING THE MUTIE DAUGHTER OF A ROMAN SENATOR FROM THE LAND THAT THE DARK AGES AND THE RENAISSANCE (NOT TO MENTION EVERYTHING SINCE) FORGOT, AND THEN TALK TO ME ABOUT PROBLEMS!
WELL, I BELIEVE IT--WOOF'A'BEAM'S THE BEST THERE IS AT WHAT HE DOES, ALL RIGHT!
YEAH-- TWELVE SIX-PACKS IN FIVE MINUTES!
THAT'S EVEN BETTER THAN I DID AND THANKS TO MY SCHIZOMORPHIC POWERS, THERE WERE EIGHT OF ME!
GOOD GOSH! HOW CAN I BE ON THE RUN AS A FEARED AND HATED MUTIE WANNA-BE WHEN I'M ALSO THE ABSOLUTE RULER OF THE DAEMONIC GUMBO I SPENT MY FORMATIVE YEARS IN AND IT'S TIME FOR MY REGULAR DEPRAVED AND EVIL DAEMONIC BRUNCH RECEPTION?
IT HARDLY GIVES A GIRL ENOUGH TIME TO BE A TYPICAL DISPLACED RUSSIAN TEENAGER!
EVERY TIME I HIT SOMEONE, I GET STUPIDER. OR SHOULD THAT BE "MORE STUPID"? DO I DARE EVER EXERT MY MUTIE STRENGTH AGAIN?
AND IF I HIT ENOUGH PEOPLE, WILL I STOP CARING ABOUT QUESTIONS LIKE THIS?
WHY AM I EVEN PART OF THIS, DUSK KITTEN? I'M NOT A MUTIE-- MY POWERS CAME FROM AN ENCHANTED AMULET GIVEN TO ME BY A POWERFUL WIZARD!
...PROBABLY THE AMULET'S A MUTIE GEMSTONE OR SOMETHING. YOU'RE COVERED.
WHY GARGLEAND ANYWAY ALLGIBBERISH DOESTHIS SPOUT-- SELF THE LIKETALK TIMEMUST THIS SELF ISN'T LIKELOOKS, GEEKIT SELF SPACE AN ENOUGHINCREDIBLE THAT?
WHAT ARE YOU SAYING OARLOCK?
AACK! THPHT!
OH--THAT I UNDERSTAND! DOWN THE HALL AND TO THE LEFT.
WHAT DO YOU MEAN, "IS THAT IT?" I'LL HAVE YOU KNOW THAT LIGHTING UP LOTS OF DIFFERENT COLORS IS TOO A VALUABLE POWER! AND IT'S NOT ALL I DO, EITHER!
I... I ALSO SKATE!
BUT ENOUGH OF THIS HAPPY BANTER! IF WE DON'T GET THIS PLOT STARTED, THIS EPIC EVENT COULD TAKE ALL YEAR!

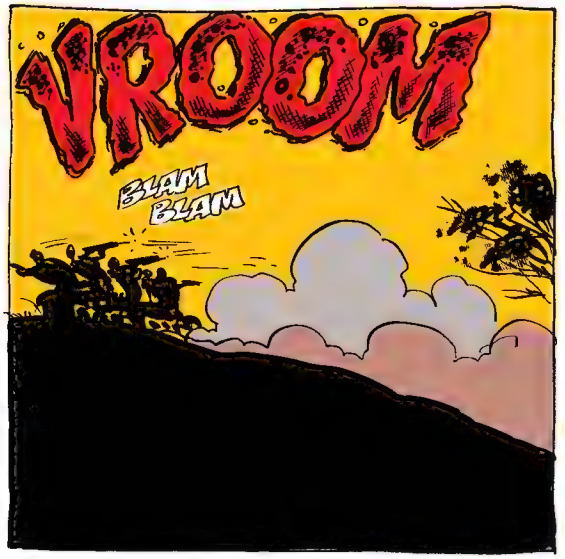
HEY, IF THIS IS THE "MUTANT BEACH PARTY," WHERE'S THE BEACH?
AND WHO'S IN THIS OMINOUS CONSORTIUM OF OUR MOST DEADLY AND MOST IMPLACABLE ENEMIES WE'RE HIDING FROM, ANYWAY?
AND WHAT'S OUR MYSTERIOUS S-FACTOR, HUH?
OH, REALLY, HALFSHOT, DOES ANY O' THAT MATTER NEXT TO THE FACT THAT I CAN'T EVER KNOW > AHEM! < "A MAN'S TOUCH" WITHOUT STEALING HIS POWERS, HIS MEMORIES AND MAYBE HIS WALLET--
--AND I'VE GOT TO WEAR THIS SPECIAL PANCAKE MAKE-UP TO CONTROL MY MUTIE POWER?
QUIET, ROGUE! AS THE LEAST-INFORMED MUTIE, HALFSHOT'S GOT A RIGHT TO ASK STUPID QUESTIONS. IT GIVES HIM SOMETHING TO DO, IF NOTHING ELSE.
IT'S VERY SIMPLE, HALFSHOT-- OUR MYSTERIOUS S-FACTOR IS THAT PART OF OUR GENETIC CODE THAT CAUSES PHENOMINAL SALES. WITHOUT IT, WE'D JUST BE ORDINARY COMIC BOOK CHARACTERS.
AS FOR YOUR OTHER QUESTIONS--
BAM! BAM! BAM!
WHAT'S THAT?! COULD IT BE THE OMINOUS CONSORTIUM OF OUR MOST DEADLY AND MOST IMPLACABLE ENEMIES, COME TO SLAY US?
KA-BOOM!
NOT QUITE-- IT'S ONLY THE FRATERNITY OF HONKED-OFF MUTIES!
THEY SHARE OUR MYSTERIOUS S-FACTOR, BUT SINCE THEY'RE BAD GUYS AND DON'T HAVE THEIR OWN SERIES, THEY DON'T GET TO SHARE IN THE HUGE ROYALTIES WE EARN!
HA! A TEMPORARY INEQUITY, I ASSURE YOU, EYECLOPS! NOW THAT WE'VE CHANGED OUR NAME TO THE JUSTICE JUNTA, WE'RE OFFICIALLY GOOD GUYS-- AND WE CAN KILL YOU AND TAKE OVER YOUR SERIES!
BOOMF
WHERE'D THEY GO?
AND WHAT'S THAT AWFUL SMELL?
NIGHT-BOOMFER!

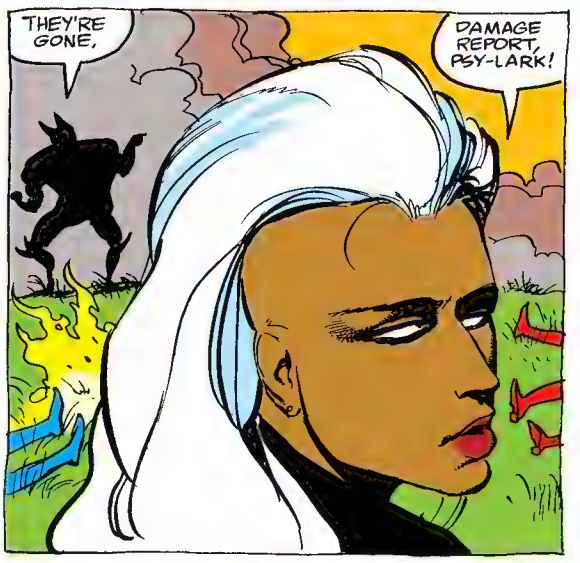

BOOMF!
THAT'S RIGHT-- I SAVED US ALL!
BUT YOU CAN'T BOOMF THAT MANY PEOPLE AT ONCE!
ORDINARILY, NO! BUT I'VE BEEN EXPERIENCING STRANGE AND UNCONTROLLABLE UPSURGES IN MY POWER, ACCOMPANIED BY EVIL, VICIOUS AND RUTHLESS IMPULSES!
I DON'T KNOW WHAT IT MEANS!
GASP! I DO! YOU'RE BECOMING DARK NIGHT-BOOMFER!
REALLY!! AND I'VE BEEN WAITING SO LONG! I THOUGHT IT'D NEVER HAPPEN!
HEY, CONGRATULATIONS --I KNEW YOU'D DO IT! YOU'RE JUST A LATE BLOOMER THAT'S ALL!
CAN THE CONGRATULATIONS, WOOF 'A' EAM! OUR SECURITY'S BEEN BREACHED-- WE'VE GOT TO FIND ANOTHER HIDING PLACE!
OH, YOO-HOO!
WHAT? WHO'S THAT?
COULD IT BE... THE OMINOUS CONSORTIUM OF OUR MOST DEADLY AND MOST IMPLACABLE ENEMIES?
WHOEVER THEY ARE?
HI, GUYS!
SLICKSILVER! THE SCARLETT WENCH!
HAVE YOU COME TO JOIN US IN THIS, OUR MOST TROUBLED HOUR?
I WISH WE COULD, BUT WE'VE GOT TO RUN, WE'RE IN ANOTHER STORY IN THIS VERY ISSUE!
WE JUST THOUGHT WE'D DROP BY FOR A-- MUTANT BEACH PARTY CROSSOVER!
OH, BY THE WAY, WE RAN INTO AN OMINOUS CONSORTIUM OF YOUR MOST DEADLY AND MOST IMPLACABLE ENEMIES ON THE WAY UP-- THEY WERE LOOKING FOR YOU.
THANKS FOR THE WARNING.
DON'T MENTION IT.


SOON...
MARBLE GIRL! DO YOUR TELEPATHIC POWERS REVEAL ANY DANGER?
OH, YOU BIG SILLY-- DON'T YOU REMEMBER? I LOST MY TELEPATHETIC POWERS DUE TO THE TRAUMA OF BEING LOCKED IN A CLOSET BY KLOENIX FOR FIVE YEARS!
BUT KLOENIX II, THE DAUGHTER WE NEVER HAD (LITERALLY), HAS INHERITED THOSE OLD POWERS OF MINE FROM THE DELUXE, DIRECT-ONLY VERSION OF KLOENIX-- YOU KNOW, FROM THE DIMENSION WHERE I NEVER GOT RESCUED FROM THAT DARN CLOSET?
MAYBE SHE KNOWS.
I CAN'T KEEP TRACK OF THIS STUFF ANYMORE...
I DON'T SENSE ANYTHING-- BUT THAT COULD BE DUE TO MY ALMOST TERMINAL ANGST OVER YOUR NOT BEING MY REAL PARENTS!
IMAGINE HOW WE FEEL-- WE'RE NOT EVEN MARRIED!
WURF! WURF! WURF!
MAGNEAT-O, LOOK! HE FOLLOWED US HOME-- CAN HE JOIN THE MUTIE WANNA-BEs?
IS HE A MUTIE?
WELLLL... IF HIS PARENTS WERE HUMAN, WOULDN'T THAT MAKE HIM A MUTIE?
IT CERTAINLY WOULD! ARE THEY?
THEY MIGHT BE...
GOOD ENOUGH. GIVE HIM A COSTUME.
WHAT'S HIS NAME?
MUFFIN?
NO GOOD. HOW ABOUT CARNIVORAX?
BEHIND THE UNSUSPECTING MUTIE WANNA-BEs, MENACING SHADOWS SHIFT--


--AND STRIKE!
VROOM VROOM VROOOOOOOM!
ACK! SURELY THIS MUST BE THE OMINOUS CONSORTIUM OF OUR MOST DEADLY AND MOST IMPLACABLE ENEMIES!

BUDDA-BUDDA BUDDA-BUDDA BUDDA BUDDA BUDDA BUDDA
SKA-BLAM
BUDDA
BUDDA
BUDDA BUDDA BUDDA
NO--IT'S THE HOTRODDERS, AGENTS OF BIG DADDY SINISTER ON A SEARCH-AND-DESTROY MISSION AGAINST ALL MUTIES-- BUT ESPECIALLY THOSE WITH MINOR OR INCONSEQUENTIAL ROLES!

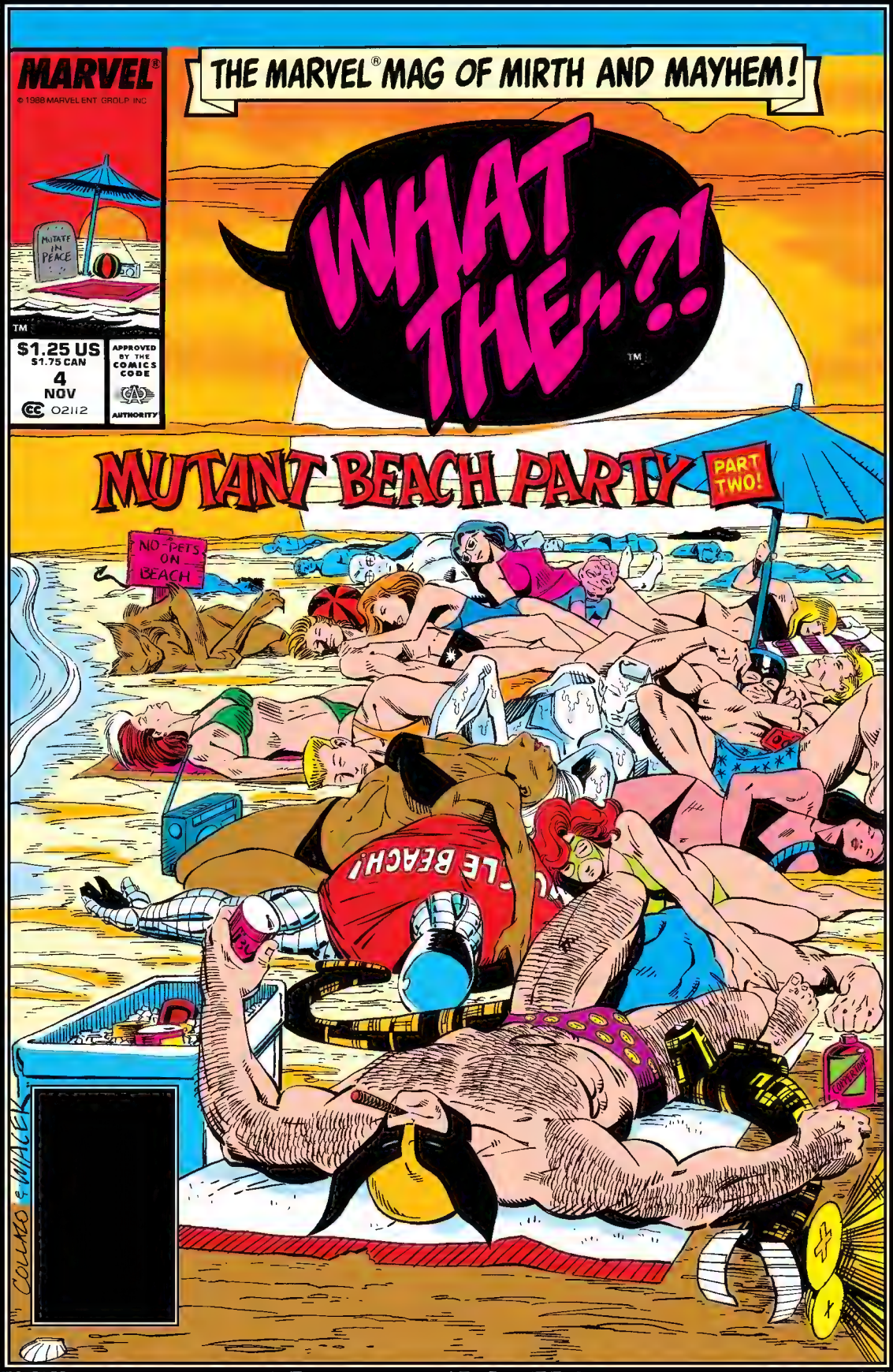

VROOM
BLAM BLAM


THEY'RE GONE,
DAMAGE REPORT, PSY-LARK!

127 MUTIES AND 14 STAR TREK SECURITY GUARDS DEAD, STURM-UND-DRANG. MAYBE TWICE THAT MANY WOUNDED.
ANYBODY WE KNOW?

NOPE... ALL COMPLETE NOBODIES, AS FAR AS I CAN TELL.
HMM... THEIR USUAL PATTERN.
WHAT NEXT?

WELL, I DON'T KNOW ABOUT YOU, BUT I'M FEELING A STRANGE DISTURBANCE...
AS IF MILLIONS CRIED OUT IN FEAR AND WERE SUDDENLY SILENCED?
NO--AS IF SOMETHING VERY BIG AND HEAVY WERE HEADED THIS WAY!
GASP
CHOKE
HOLY HANNAH!*
*JUST FOR OLD TIMES' SAKE--
Nostalgic Jim.
THOOM! THOOM
IT'S THE LIVING HUMONGOUS MENHIR! --A CRAZED MUTIE IRANIAN MARKETING EXECUTIVE, WHO, UPON EXPOSURE TO COMICS RADIATION, GETS ALL HUGE AND STONE-LIKE AND PLOTS WAYS TO ISOLATE THE MUTIES' MYSTERIOUS S-FACTOR AND USE IT FOR HIS OWN ENDS!
RIGHT-- AND I'VE FINALLY FIGURED OUT WHAT THE CATALYST IS THAT, WHEN ADDED TO THE MYSTERIOUS S-FACTOR, GENERATES ENORMOUS ALE!
WHAT IS IT?
DEATH!
WELL, AT LEAST IT WASN'T THE OMINOUS CONSORTIUM OF OUR MOST DEADLY AND MOST IMPLACABLE ENEMIES!
YEAH-- WHO ARE THEY, ANYWAY?
TO BE CONTINUED--
NEXT
Salescurve Rising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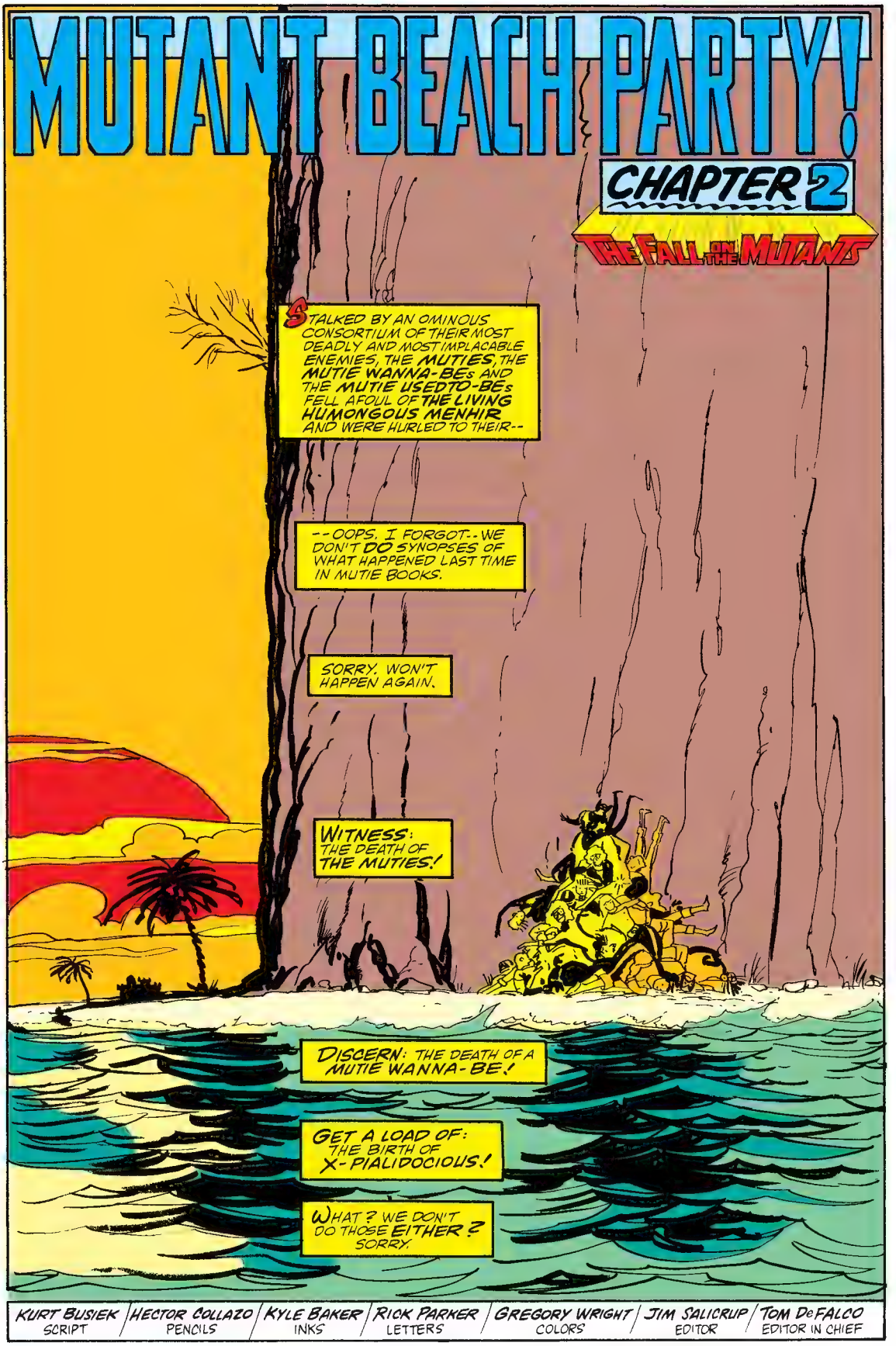
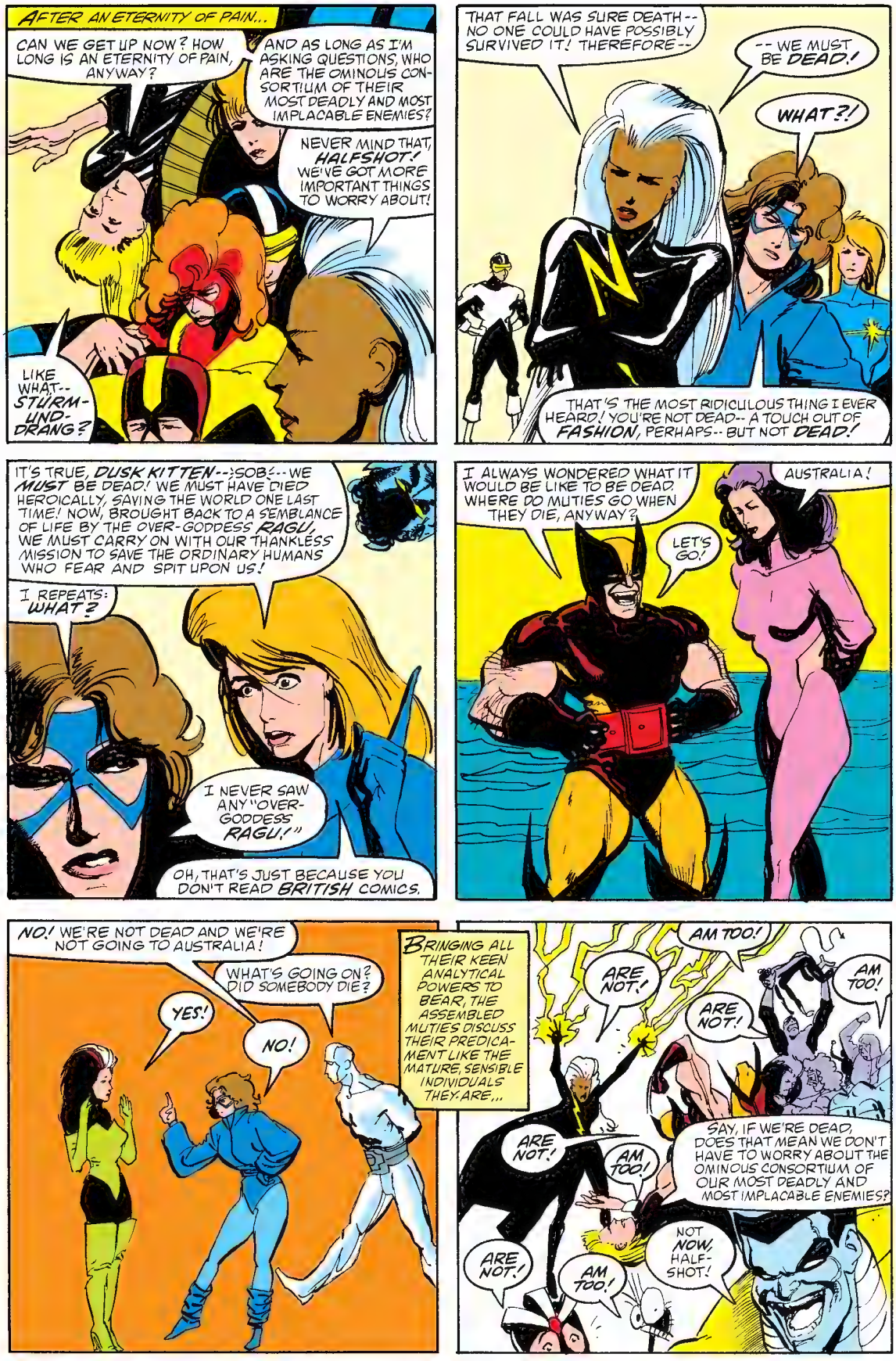
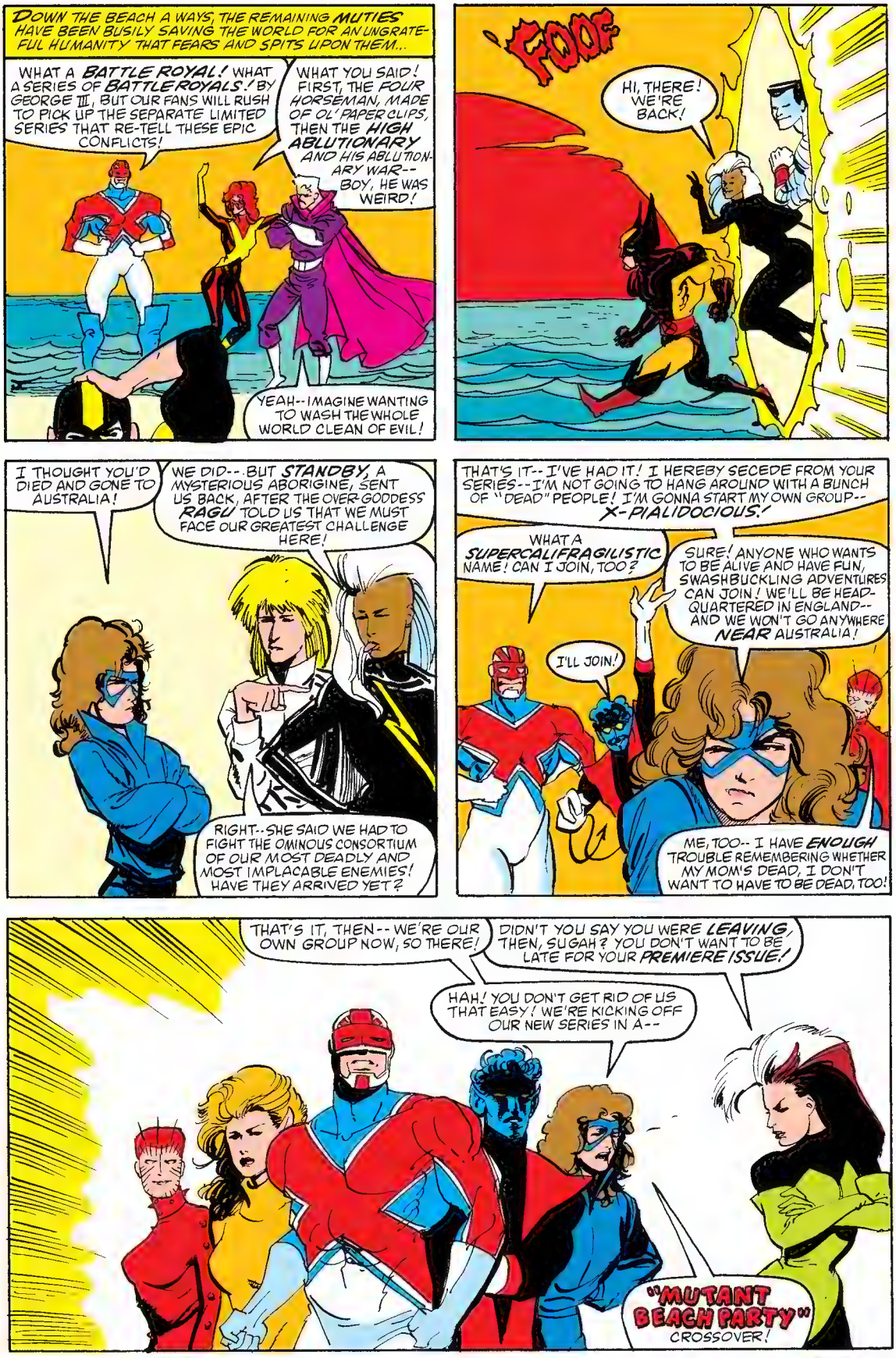
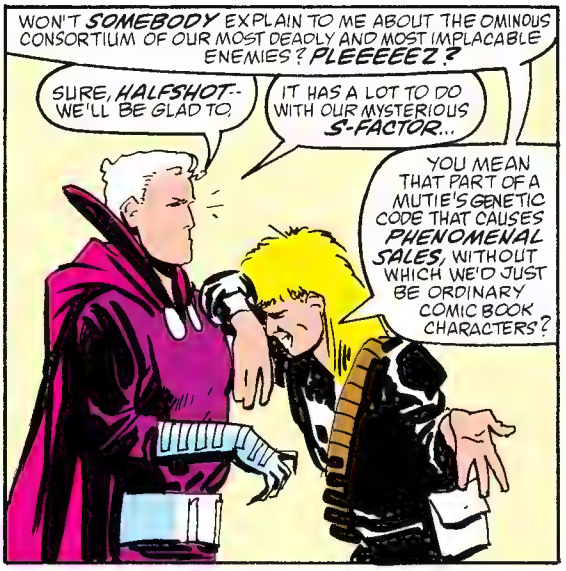
WHAT THE..?!
MUTANT BEACH PARTY
PART TWO!
NO PETS ON BEACH
COLLINS & WYATT


MUTANT BEACH PARTY!
CHAPTER 2
THE FALL OF THE MUTANTS
STALKED BY AN OMINOUS CONSORTIUM OF THEIR MOST DEADLY AND MOST IMPLACABLE ENEMIES, THE MUTIES, THE MUTIE WANNA-BEs AND THE MUTIE USEDTO-BEs FELL AFOUL OF THE LIVING HUMONGOUS MENHIR AND WERE HURLED TO THEIR--
--OOPS. I FORGOT-- WE DON'T DO SYNOPSES OF WHAT HAPPENED LAST TIME IN MUTIE BOOKS.
SORRY. WON'T HAPPEN AGAIN.
WITNESS: THE DEATH OF THE MUTIES!
DISCERN: THE DEATH OF A MUTIE WANNA-BE!
GET A LOAD OF: THE BIRTH OF X-PIALIDOCIOUS!
WHAT? WE DON'T DO THOSE EITHER? SORRY.
KURT BUSIEK SCRIPT
HECTOR COLLAZO PENCILS
KYLE BAKER INKS
RICK PARKER LETTERS
GREGORY WRIGHT COLORS
JIM SALICRUP EDITOR
TOM DeFALCO EDITOR IN CHIEF

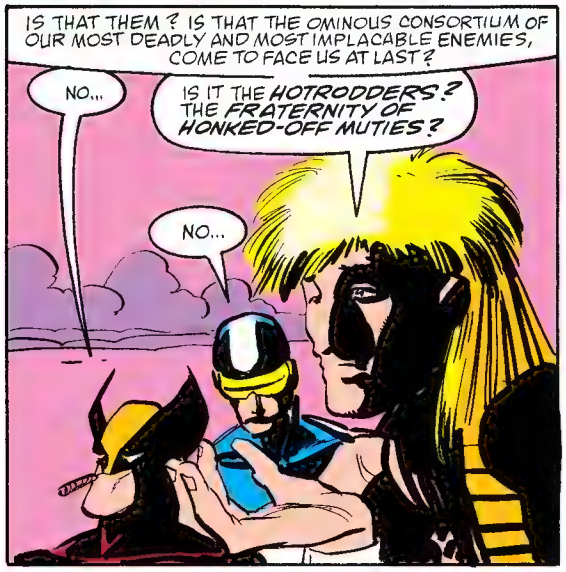

AFTER AN ETERNITY OF PAIN...
CAN WE GET UP NOW? HOW LONG IS AN ETERNITY OF PAIN, ANYWAY?
AND AS LONG AS I'M ASKING QUESTIONS, WHO ARE THE OMINOUS CONSORTIUM OF THEIR MOST DEADLY AND MOST IMPLACABLE ENEMIES?
NEVER MIND THAT, HALFSHOT! WE'VE GOT MORE IMPORTANT THINGS TO WORRY ABOUT!
LIKE WHAT-- STURM-UND-DRANG?
THAT FALL WAS SURE DEATH-- NO ONE COULD HAVE POSSIBLY SURVIVED IT! THEREFORE--
-- WE MUST BE DEAD!
WHAT?!
THAT'S THE MOST RIDICULOUS THING I EVER HEARD! YOU'RE NOT DEAD-- A TOUCH OUT OF FASHION, PERHAPS-- BUT NOT DEAD!
IT'S TRUE, DUSK KITTEN--:SOB:--WE MUST BE DEAD! WE MUST HAVE DIED HEROICALLY, SAVING THE WORLD ONE LAST TIME! NOW, BROUGHT BACK TO A SEMBLANCE OF LIFE BY THE OVER-GODDESS RAGU, WE MUST CARRY ON WITH OUR THANKLESS MISSION TO SAVE THE ORDINARY HUMANS WHO FEAR AND SPIT UPON US!
I REPEATS: WHAT?
I NEVER SAW ANY "OVER-GODDESS RAGU!"
OH, THAT'S JUST BECAUSE YOU DON'T READ BRITISH COMICS.
I ALWAYS WONDERED WHAT IT WOULD BE LIKE TO BE DEAD. WHERE DO MUTIES GO WHEN THEY DIE, ANYWAY?
LET'S GO.
AUSTRALIA!
NO! WE'RE NOT DEAD AND WE'RE NOT GOING TO AUSTRALIA!
WHAT'S GOING ON? DID SOMEBODY DIE?
YES!
NO!
BRINGING ALL THEIR KEEN ANALYTICAL POWERS TO BEAR, THE ASSEMBLED MUTIES DISCUSS THEIR PREDICAMENT LIKE THE MATURE, SENSIBLE INDIVIDUALS THEY ARE...
ARE NOT!
AM TOO!
ARE NOT!
AM TOO!
ARE NOT!
AM TOO!
ARE NOT!
AM TOO!
SAY, IF WE'RE DEAD, DOES THAT MEAN WE DON'T HAVE TO WORRY ABOUT THE OMINOUS CONSORTIUM OF OUR MOST DEADLY AND MOST IMPLACABLE ENEMIES?
NOT NOW, HALFSHOT!

... AND SOON, A FATEFUL AND WEIGHTY DECISION IS REACHED!
OKAY-- YOU WANT TO BE DEAD? GO AHEAD, BE DEAD-- SEE IF I CARE!
EVERYBODY WHO'S DEAD, C'MON WITH US! WE'RE GOING TO AUSTRALIA!
FOOF
AND GOOD RIDDANCE!
NEARBY, A MORE PERSONAL, BUT NO LESS EARTH-SHATTERING DRAMA UNFOLDS...
HEY, NON-ENTITY-- GET UP!
IS HE ASLEEP?
I DON'T KNOW-- HE DOESN'T SEEM TO BE BREATHING.
MAYBE HE'S DEAD.
IF HE'S DEAD, WOULDN'T HE BE IN AUSTRALIA?
I KNOW-- I'LL USE MY RE-RUN POWERS TO GENERATE AN IMAGE OF WHAT HAPPENED!
GOOD THINKING, MAGNAVOX!
BY ALL THE GODS OF NOVA SCOTIA-- THE FORGOTTEN ROMAN EMPIRE WHERE I GREW UP-- WHEN WE FELL OFF THAT CLIFF, WE ALL LANDED ON NON-ENTITY!
NO WONDER WE'RE NOT DEAD!
NO WONDER HE IS.
WELL, WHAT ARE WE GONNA DO?
WE MUST RECOGNIZE THAT HE DIED TO SAVE US ALL, AND THAT HIS SPIRIT WILL ALWAYS BE WITH US!
IT WILL?
DOES THAT MEAN WE GET TO COME UP WITH A NEW NAME FOR HIM? HOW ABOUT GHOST BOY?
TOO OLD-FASHIONED. WE'LL CALL HIM DOORNAIL. NOW, AS FOR HIS NEW COSTUME...


DOWN THE BEACH A WAYS, THE REMAINING MUTIES HAVE BEEN BUSILY SAVING THE WORLD FOR AN UNGRATEFUL HUMANITY THAT FEARS AND SPITS UPON THEM...
WHAT A BATTLE ROYAL! WHAT A SERIES OF BATTLE ROYALS! BY GEORGE III, BUT OUR FANS WILL RUSH TO PICK UP THE SEPARATE LIMITED SERIES THAT RE-TELL THESE EPIC CONFLICTS!
WHAT YOU SAID! FIRST, THE FOUR HORSEMAN, MADE OF OL' PAPER CLIPS, THEN THE HIGH ABLUTIONARY AND HIS ABLUTIONARY WAR-- BOY, HE WAS WEIRD!
YEAH--IMAGINE WANTING TO WASH THE WHOLE WORLD CLEAN OF EVIL!
FOOF
HI, THERE! WE'RE BACK!
I THOUGHT YOU'D DIED AND GONE TO AUSTRALIA!
WE DID---BUT STANDBY, A MYSTERIOUS ABORIGINE, SENT US BACK, AFTER THE OVER-GODDESS RAGU TOLD US THAT WE MUST FACE OUR GREATEST CHALLENGE HERE!
RIGHT--SHE SAID WE HAD TO FIGHT THE OMINOUS CONSORTIUM OF OUR MOST DEADLY AND MOST IMPLACABLE ENEMIES! HAVE THEY ARRIVED YET?
THAT'S IT-- I'VE HAD IT! I HEREBY SECEDE FROM YOUR SERIES--I'M NOT GOING TO HANG AROUND WITH A BUNCH OF "DEAD" PEOPLE! I'M GONNA START MY OWN GROUP-- X-PIALIDOCIOUS!
WHAT A SUPERCALIFRAGILISTIC NAME! CAN I JOIN, TOO?
SURE! ANYONE WHO WANTS TO BE ALIVE AND HAVE FUN, SWASHBUCKLING ADVENTURES CAN JOIN! WE'LL BE HEADQUARTERED IN ENGLAND-- AND WE WON'T GO ANYWHERE NEAR AUSTRALIA!
I'LL JOIN!
ME, TOO-- I HAVE ENOUGH TROUBLE REMEMBERING WHETHER MY MOM'S DEAD, I DON'T WANT TO HAVE TO BE DEAD, TOO!
THAT'S IT, THEN-- WE'RE OUR OWN GROUP NOW, SO THERE!
DIDN'T YOU SAY YOU WERE LEAVING, THEN, SUGAH? YOU DON'T WANT TO BE LATE FOR YOUR PREMIERE ISSUE!
HAH! YOU DON'T GET RID OF US THAT EASY! WE'RE KICKING OFF OUR NEW SERIES IN A--
"MUTANT BEACH PARTY" CROSSOVER!


WON'T SOMEBODY EXPLAIN TO ME ABOUT THE OMINOUS CONSORTIUM OF OUR MOST DEADLY AND MOST IMPLACABLE ENEMIES? PLEEEEEZ?
SURE, HALFSHOT-- WE'LL BE GLAD TO.
IT HAS A LOT TO DO WITH OUR MYSTERIOUS S-FACTOR...
YOU MEAN THAT PART OF A MUTIE'S GENETIC CODE THAT CAUSES PHENOMENAL SALES, WITHOUT WHICH WE'D JUST BE ORDINARY COMIC BOOK CHARACTERS?

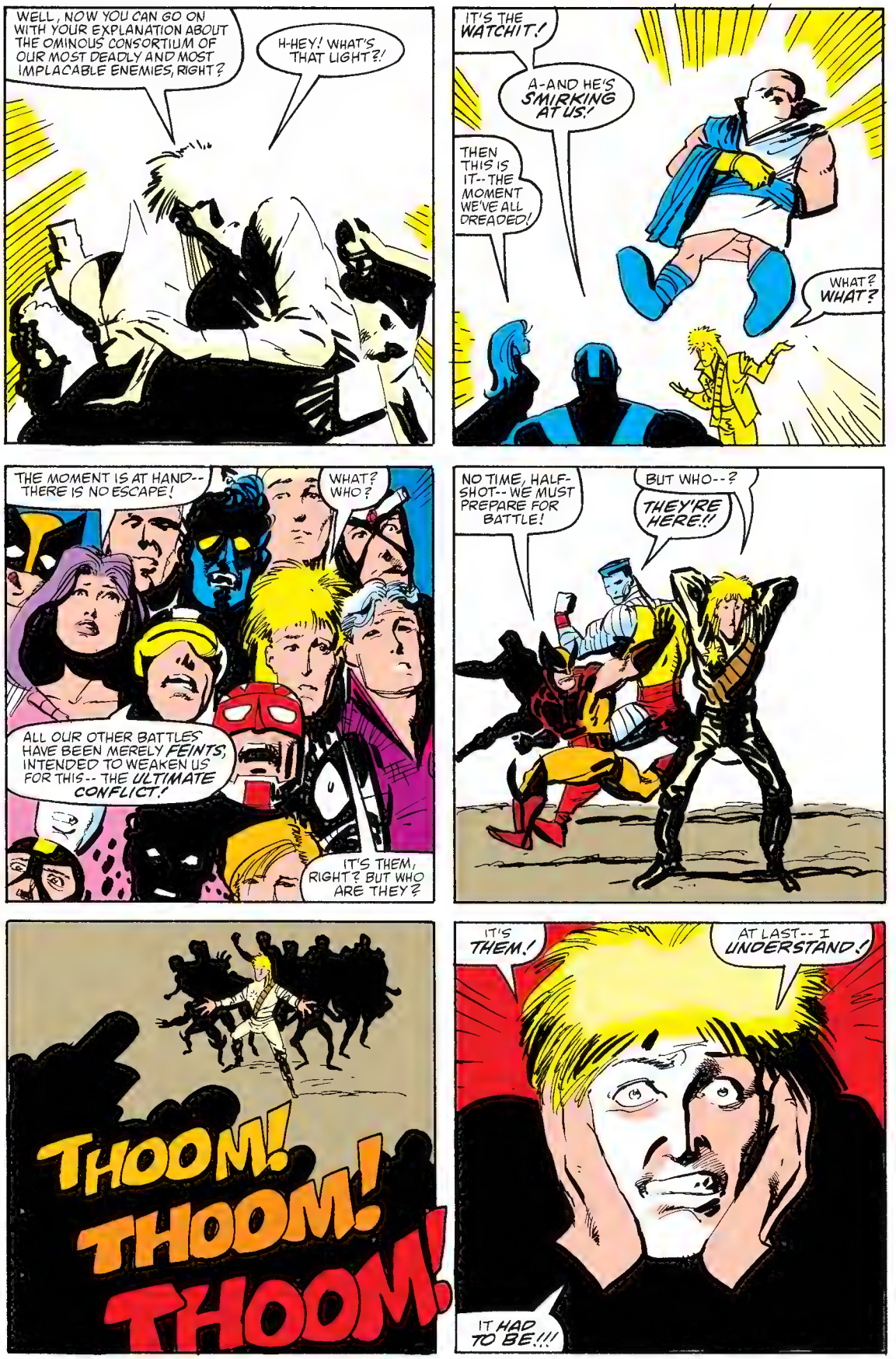
THAT'S RIGHT. NOW, YOU KNOW THAT SOME OTHER CHARACTERS WANT TO HAVE THE S-FACTOR, TOO-- THE BOWER BRATS HAVE PRETENDED TO BE MUTIES, AND CLUNK AND DAGNABBIT HAVE PETITIONED TO BE ALLOWED TO JOIN.
HOWEVER--
VROOM VROOM VROOM


IS THAT THEM? IS THAT THE OMINOUS CONSORTIUM OF OUR MOST DEADLY AND MOST IMPLACABLE ENEMIES, COME TO FACE US AT LAST?
NO...
IS IT THE HOTRODDERS? THE FRATERNITY OF HONKED-OFF MUTIES?
NO...

...IT'S THE READERS -- A GROUP OF COMICS FANS WHO'VE BEEN SO MORALLY CORRUPTED BY OUR ADVENTURES THAT THEY'VE REPLACED VARIOUS OF THEIR BODY PARTS WITH CYBERNETIC CIRCUITRY--
-- AND THEN, REVULSED BY WHAT THEY'D DONE, SWORE TO KILL US!!
YOU MEAN MARVEL ZOMB--
SHHHH--!! WE DON'T USE THAT TERM IN JIM SALICRUP BOOKS!

BRATTA RATTA RATTA BAM BLAM
KOOM
BUDDA BUDDA BUDDA
BOOM BLAM
THE BATTLE IS JOINED--RUTHLESS, BLOODY AND SAVAGE, NO QUARTER ASKED OR GIVEN. BUT EVEN IN THE MIDST OF ALL THIS CARNAGE, THE OUTCOME--

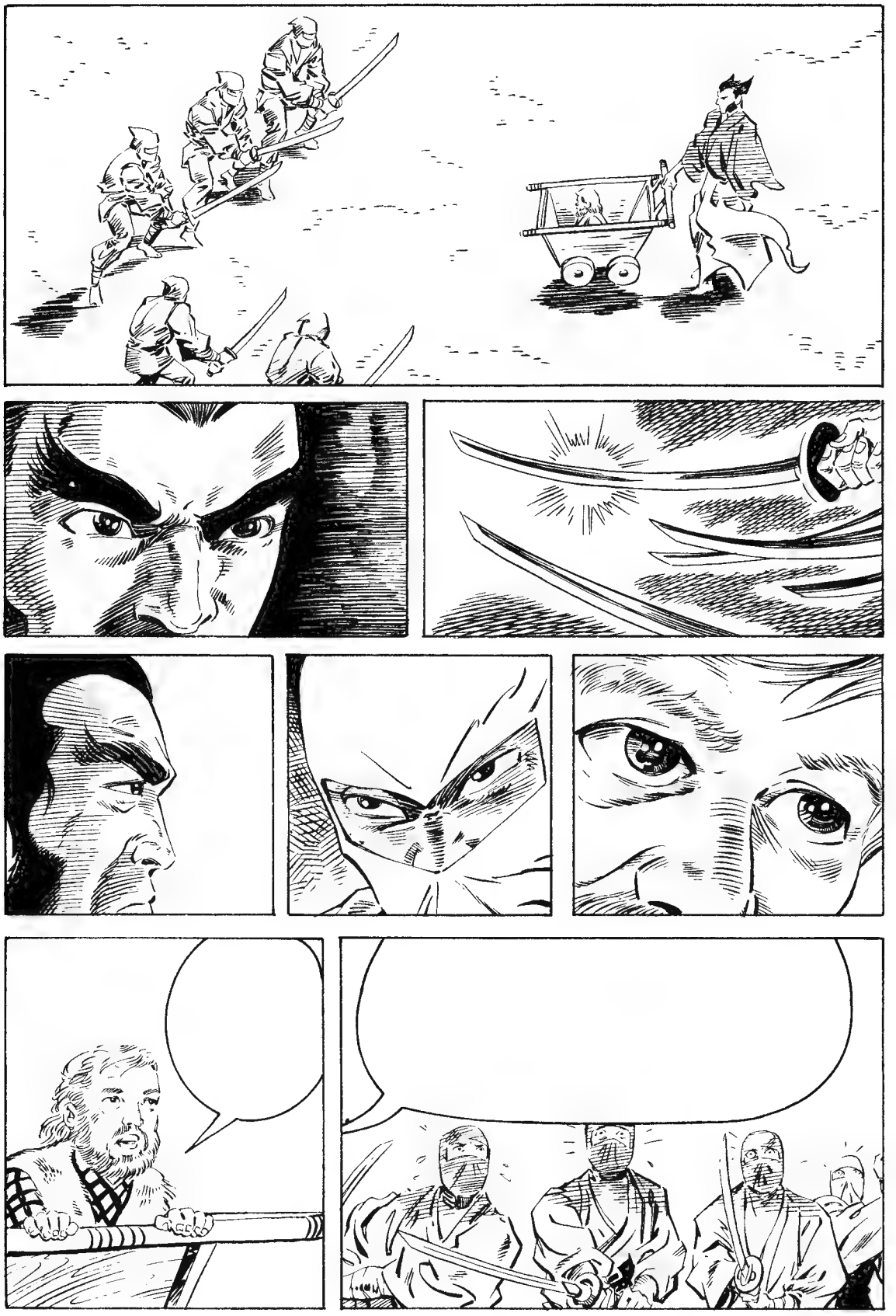
--IS NEVER IN DOUBT.
HEY, IT'S OUR SERIES, NOT THEIRS.
XMEN


WELL, NOW YOU CAN GO ON WITH YOUR EXPLANATION ABOUT THE OMINOUS CONSORTIUM OF OUR MOST DEADLY AND MOST IMPLACABLE ENEMIES, RIGHT?
H-HEY! WHAT'S THAT LIGHT?!
IT'S THE WATCHIT!
A-AND HE'S SMIRKING AT US!
THEN THIS IS IT-- THE MOMENT WE'VE ALL DREADED!
WHAT? WHAT?
THE MOMENT IS AT HAND-- THERE IS NO ESCAPE!
WHAT? WHO?
ALL OUR OTHER BATTLES HAVE BEEN MERELY FEINTS; INTENDED TO WEAKEN US FOR THIS-- THE ULTIMATE CONFLICT!
IT'S THEM, RIGHT? BUT WHO ARE THEY?
NO TIME, HALF-SHOT-- WE MUST PREPARE FOR BATTLE!
BUT WHO--?
THEY'RE HERE!!
THOOM! THOOM! THOOM!
IT'S THEM!
AT LAST-- I UNDERSTAND!
IT HAD TO BE!!!

WE'VE HAD IT UP TO HERE WITH YOU OUTSELLING US, MUTIES!
WE'RE GOING TO WIPE YOU OFF THE FACE OF COMICS!!
WE USED TO BE THE STARS-- AND WE'RE GOING TO BE STARS AGAIN!
AND WE'RE GOING TO ENJOY IT!!
HELP?
THE EVER-LOVIN' END!

LONE WOLVIE and CHRIS

ローン ウールヴァイン アンド クリス

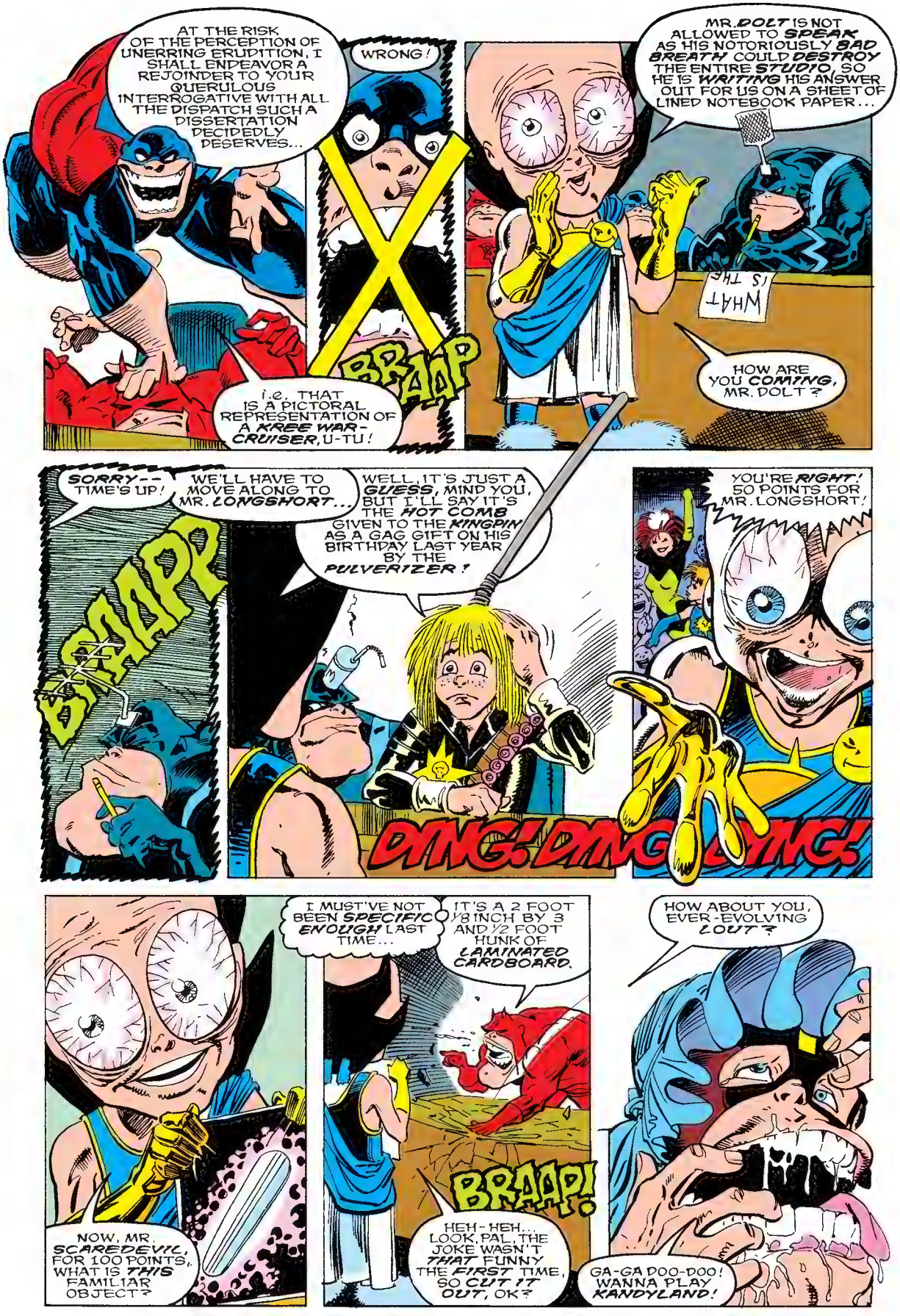


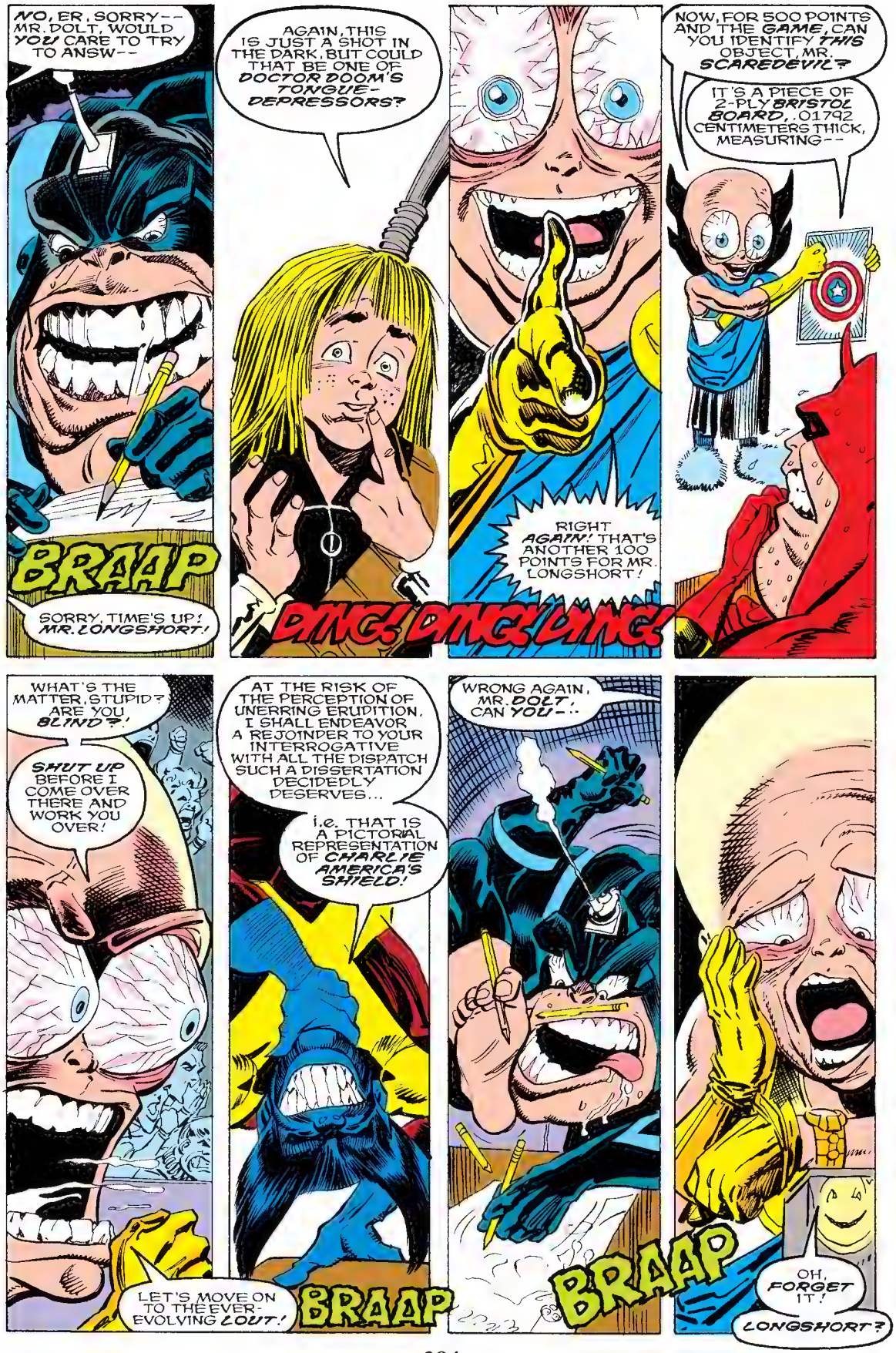
スニク
THE WARRIOR'S WAY. THE CURDS AND WAY
YET NO ONE WOULD SUSPECT THE
TORMENT THAT TORMENTS MY
TORMENTED SOUL. I HURT
SO MUCH. I HURT MORE THAN ANYONE
WOULD EVER SUSPECT. OH, BROTHER.
DO I HURT!
ESPECIALLY
THIS SILVER
FILLING THAT'S
BEEN BOTHERING ME FOR TWO
WEEKS NOW AND REALLY JUST
KILLS ME EVERYTIME I EAT A
THREE MUSKETEERS BAR... WHICH
REMINDS ME OF
A JOKE--
I'M THE BEST AT WHAT I DO. BUT WHAT
I DO ISN'T PRETTY. IT ISN'T VERY NICE.
IT ISN'T EVEN CODE-APPROVED. I
WALK THE DARK ROAD TO HECK.
THE ASSASSIN'S WAY

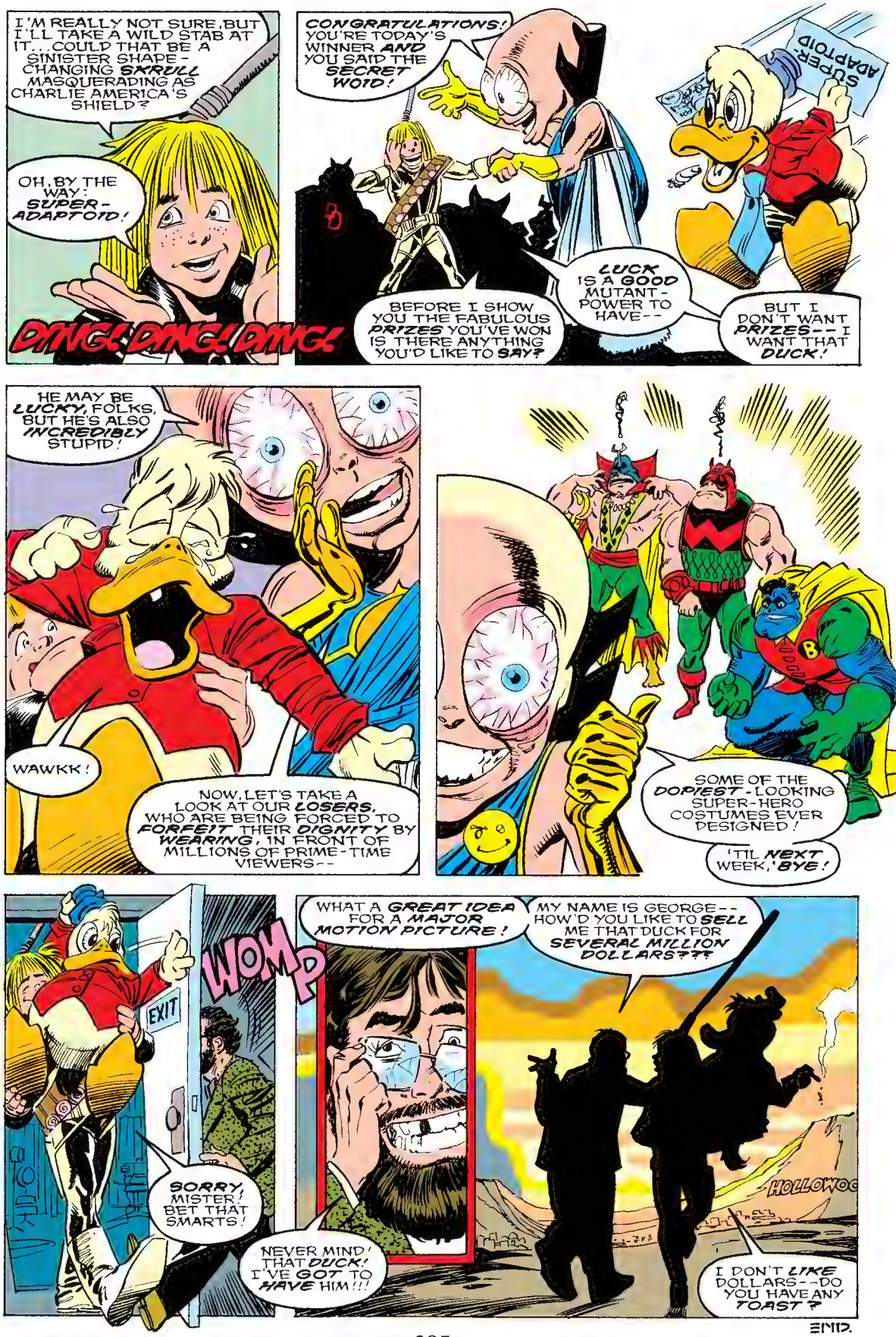
SAY, WHAT DO YOU THINK OF THIS DYNAMITE HAIRCUT? PRETTY SHARP, EH? LISTEN, BUB, IT'S NOT TOO EASY TO GET YOUR HAIR TO STICK UP LIKE THIS. IT TAKES YEARS OF TRAINING--HARD WORK. A RAIL ROAD CAR FULL OF STYLING MOUSSE. FORTUNATELY, I'M THE BEST THERE IS AT WHAT I DO. AND I'M NOT JUST A "HAIR CLUB FOR MU- TANTS" PRESIDENT. I'MA ALSO A CLIENT. THAT'S HOW I WAS ABLE TO GET THIS NIFTY ADAMANTIUM SKELE TON. THIS STUFF DOESN'T GROW ON TREES, YOU KNOW. MY BROTHER IN- LAW GOT IT FOR ME WHOLESALE!! AND SUCH A FIT!!! HERE FEEL! IS THAT WONDERFUL OR

IT'S TIME AGAIN FOR AMERICA'S FAVORITE SUPER-HERO GAME SHOW: YOU BET YOUR DIGNITY!!! HERE'S OUR HOST, NOTED BLABBERMOUTH AND SYNDICATED COLUMNIST FOR THE NATIONAL INTRUDER...
MR. U-TU, THE PEEPING TOM!
WELCOME WELCOME TO YOU BET YOUR DIGNITY! SAY THE SECRET WORD AND THE DUCK WILL DROP DOWN AND PAY YOU $100. IT'S A COMMON WORD, SOMETHING YOU SEE EVERY DAY...
TERRY AUSTIN-JIM LEE & AL WILLIAMSON WORDS PICTAHS
You bet your DIGNITY
JANICE CHIANG LETTERS
GREGORY WRIGHT COLORS
SUPER ADAPTOR
NOW LET'S MEET OUR CONTESTANTS, VYING FOR BIG PRIZES IF THEY WIN AND UNTOLD EMBARRASSMENT IF THEY LOSE!
REPRESENTING UNAFFILIATED HEROES EVERYWHERE, SAY HELLO TO SCAREDEVIL!
NO UNION DUES!
You bet your
FROM THE SUPER-MUTANT GROUP/MAKE-UP MANUFACTURERS MAX-FACTOR, PLEASE WELCOME THE EVER-EVOLVING LOUT!
FROM THE ORGANIZATION OF QUASI-HUMANS, JOIN ME IN GREETING THEIR LEADER, THE BLACK DOLT!
AND, FINALLY FROM PROFESSOR ECCH'S REFORM-SCHOOL FOR SERIOUSLY GENDER-CONFUSED MUTANT GUYS 'N' GALS MEET LONGSHORT!

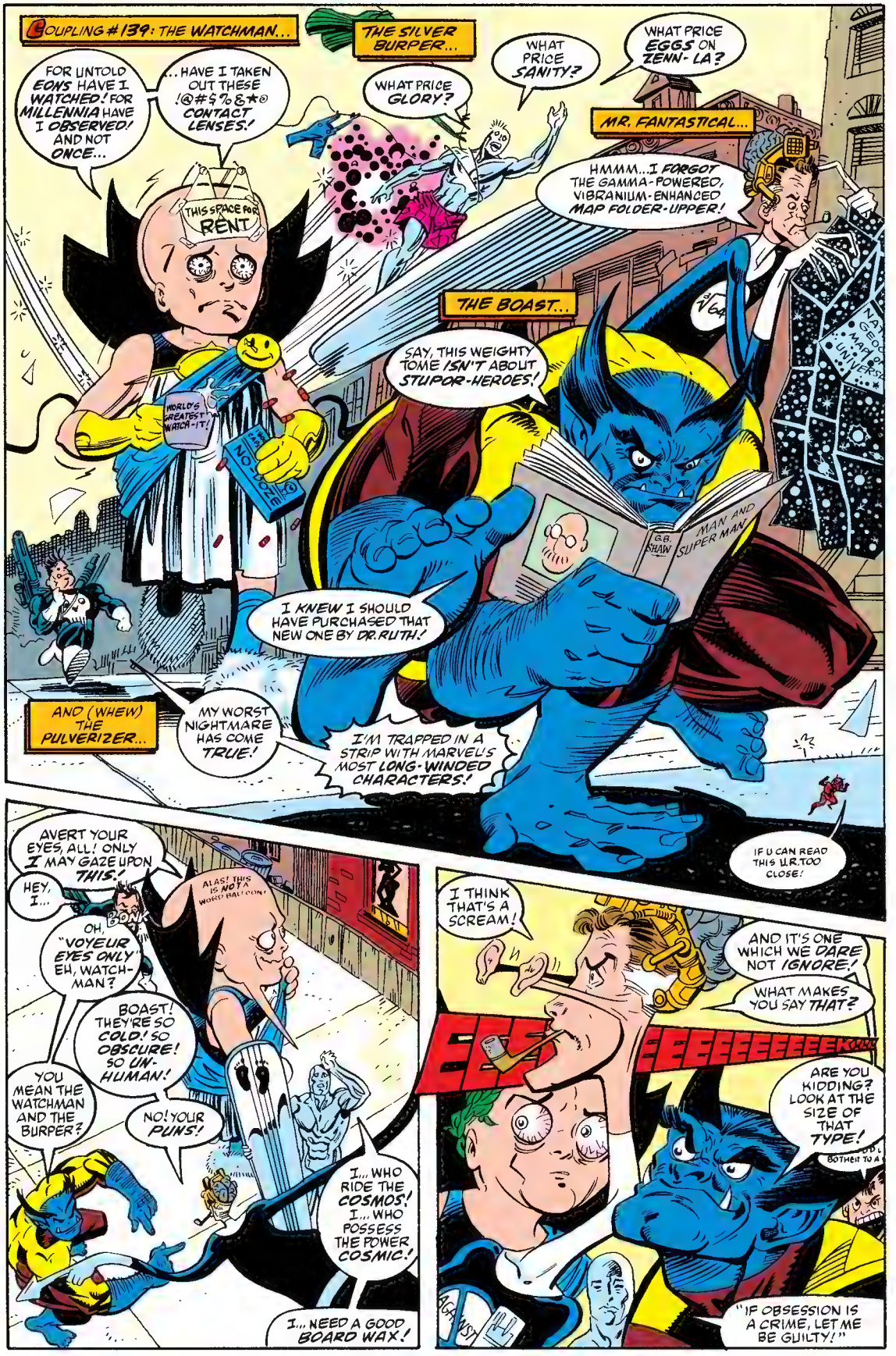
OUR SHOW WILL REQUIRE THE CONTESTANTS TO IDENTIFY FAMILIAR OBJECTS FROM AROUND THE MARVEL UNIVERSE...
MR. SCAREDEVIL, FOR 50 POINTS, WHAT IS THIS?
FORTUNATELY, MY RADAR SENSE ALLOWS ME TOTAL ACCURACY IN ALL CASES!
THAT IS A 2 FOOT BY 3 FOOT PIECE OF ORDINARY BOND PAPER, U-TU!
WHAT A GREAT KIDDER -- BUT NO POINTS FOR HUMOR, I'M AFRAID... YOUR TURN, MR. LOUT.
BRAAAP

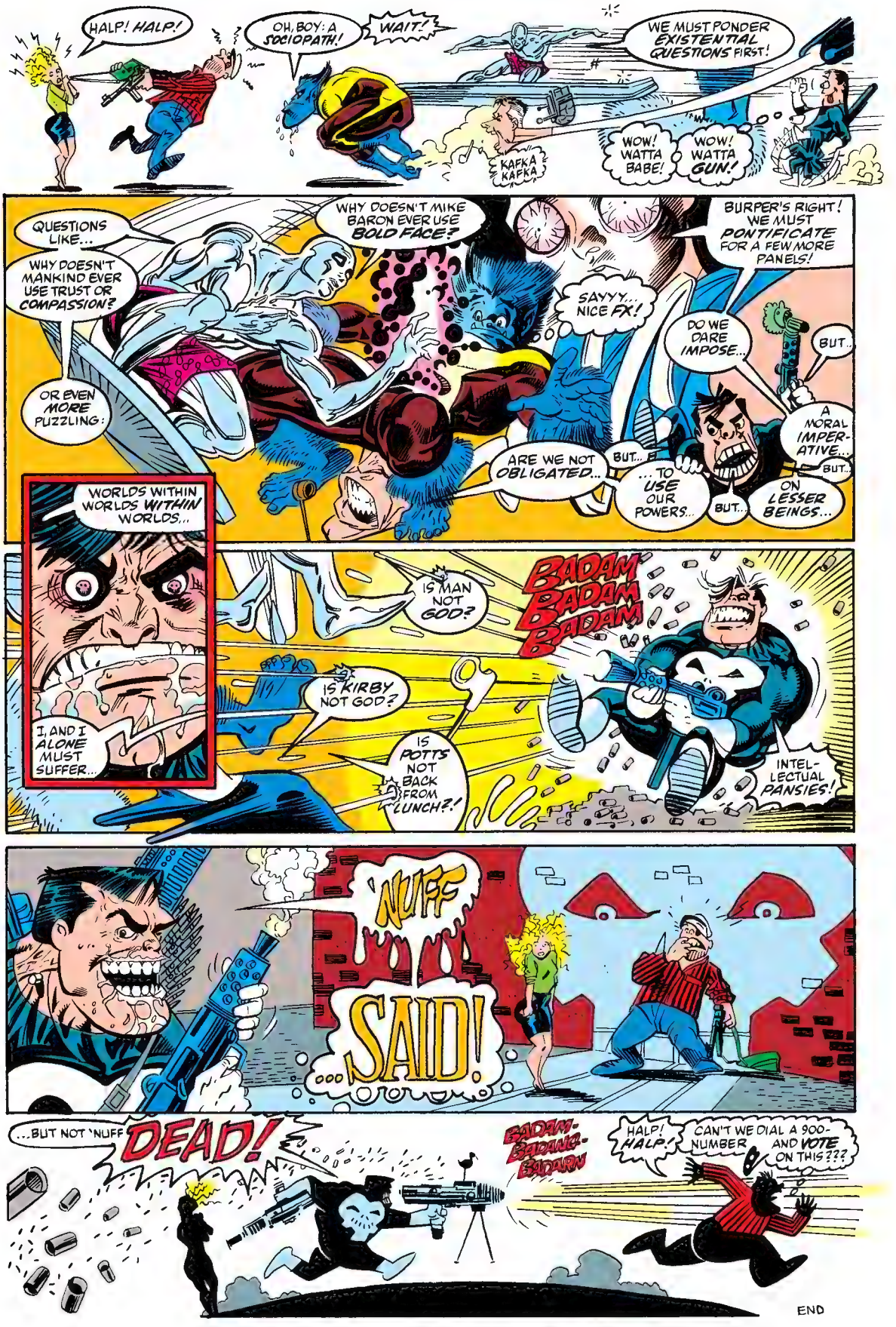

AT THE RISK OF THE PERCEPTION OF UNERRING ERUDITION, I SHALL ENDEAVOR A REJOINDER TO YOUR QUERULOUS INTERROGATIVE WITH ALL THE DISPATCH SUCH A DISSERTATION DECIDEDLY DESERVES...
WRONG!
BRAAP
i.e. THAT IS A PICTORAL REPRESENTATION OF A KREE WAR-CRUISER, U-TU!
MR. DOLT IS NOT ALLOWED TO SPEAK AS HIS NOTORIOUSLY BAD BREATH COULD DESTROY THE ENTIRE STUDIO, SO HE IS WRITING HIS ANSWER OUT FOR US ON A SHEET OF LINED NOTEBOOK PAPER...
WHAT IS THE
HOW ARE YOU COMING, MR. DOLT?
SORRY-- TIME'S UP!
WE'LL HAVE TO MOVE ALONG TO MR. LONGSHORT...
SNAP
WELL, IT'S JUST A GUESS, MIND YOU, BUT I'LL SAY IT'S THE HOT COMB GIVEN TO THE KINGPIN AS A GAG GIFT ON HIS BIRTHDAY LAST YEAR BY THE PULVERIZER!
DING! DING!
YOU'RE RIGHT! 50 POINTS FOR MR. LONGSHORT!
NOW, MR. SCAREDEVIL, FOR 100 POINTS, WHAT IS THIS FAMILIAR OBJECT?
I MUST'VE NOT BEEN SPECIFIC ENOUGH LAST TIME...
IT'S A 2 FOOT 1/8 INCH BY 3 AND 1/2 FOOT HUNK OF LAMINATED CARDBOARD.
BRAAP!
HEH-HEH... LOOK, PAL, THE JOKE WASN'T THAT FUNNY THE FIRST TIME, SO CUT IT OUT, OK?
HOW ABOUT YOU, EVER-EVOLVING LOUT?
GA-GA DOO-DOO! WANNA PLAY KANDYLAND!


NO, ER, SORRY-- MR. DOLT, WOULD YOU CARE TO TRY TO ANSW--
BRAAP
SORRY, TIME'S UP! MR. LONGSHORT!
AGAIN, THIS IS JUST A SHOT IN THE DARK, BUT COULD THAT BE ONE OF DOCTOR DOOM'S TONGUE-DEPRESSORS?
DYNG! DYNG! DYNG!
RIGHT AGAIN! THAT'S ANOTHER 100 POINTS FOR MR. LONGSHORT!
NOW, FOR 500 POINTS AND THE GAME, CAN YOU IDENTIFY THIS OBJECT, MR. SCAREDEVIL?
IT'S A PIECE OF 2-PLY BRISTOL BOARD, .01792 CENTIMETERS THICK, MEASURING--
WHAT'S THE MATTER, STUPID? ARE YOU BLIND?!
SHUT UP BEFORE I COME OVER THERE AND WORK YOU OVER!
LET'S MOVE ON TO THE EVER-EVOLVING LOUT!
AT THE RISK OF THE PERCEPTION OF UNERRING ERUDITION, I SHALL ENDEAVOR A REJOINDER TO YOUR INTERROGATIVE WITH ALL THE DISPATCH SUCH A DISSERTATION DECIDEDLY DESERVES...
i.e. THAT IS A PICTORIAL REPRESENTATION OF CHARLIE AMERICA'S SHIELD!
BRAAP
WRONG AGAIN, MR. DOLT! CAN YOU--!
BRAAP
OH, FORGET IT!
LONGSHORT?


I'M REALLY NOT SURE, BUT I'LL TAKE A WILD STAB AT IT... COULD THAT BE A SINISTER SHAPE-CHANGING SKRULL MASQUERADING AS CHARLIE AMERICA'S SHIELD?
OH, BY THE WAY: SUPER-ADAPTOID!
DING! DING! DING!
CONGRATULATIONS! YOU'RE TODAY'S WINNER AND YOU SAID THE SECRET WOID!
SUPER-ADAPTOID
BEFORE I SHOW YOU THE FABULOUS PRIZES YOU'VE WON IS THERE ANYTHING YOU'D LIKE TO SAY?
LUCK IS A GOOD MUTANT-POWER TO HAVE--
BUT I DON'T WANT PRIZES--I WANT THAT DUCK!
HE MAY BE LUCKY, FOLKS, BUT HE'S ALSO INCREDIBLY STUPID!
WAWKK!
NOW, LET'S TAKE A LOOK AT OUR LOSERS, WHO ARE BEING FORCED TO FORFEIT THEIR DIGNITY BY WEARING, IN FRONT OF MILLIONS OF PRIME-TIME VIEWERS--
SOME OF THE DOPIEST-LOOKING SUPER-HERO COSTUMES EVER DESIGNED!
'TIL NEXT WEEK, 'BYE!
WOMP
EXIT
SORRY, MISTER! BET THAT SMARTS!
WHAT A GREAT IDEA FOR A MAJOR MOTION PICTURE!
NEVER MIND! THAT DUCK! I'VE GOT TO HAVE HIM!!!
MY NAME IS GEORGE--HOW'D YOU LIKE TO SELL ME THAT DUCK FOR SEVERAL MILLION DOLLARS?!?
HOLLYWOOD
I DON'T LIKE DOLLARS--DO YOU HAVE ANY TOAST?
END.

Jim Lee PRESENTS:
ILL-CONCEIVED CHARACTER COUPLINGS
OR: TEAM-UPS THAT WILL PROBABLY NEVER GET THEIR OWN LIMITED SERIES.....
WALT JASCHEK...SCRIPT
JIM LEE...CONCEPT/PENCILS/INKS THIS PG.
AL MILGROM...INKS, NEXT COUPLE OF PAGES.
RICK PARKER...LETTERER
GREG WRIGHT...COLORS
CARL POTTS.....HONCHO
TOM DEFALCO...HEAD HONCHO
COUPLING #47: MAGNUTO and COLLASALUS
OOOPS!
FOR THIS I GAVE UP STUPOR-VILLAINY?
KIDS-- REMEMBER! MAGNETIC POWERS AND METALLIC SKIN JUST DON'T MIX!
SPROINK
CLONK


COUPLING #139: THE WATCHMAN...
THE SILVER BURPER...
FOR UNTOLD EONS HAVE I WATCHED! FOR MILLENNIA HAVE I OBSERVED! AND NOT ONCE...
...HAVE I TAKEN OUT THESE !@#$%&★® CONTACT LENSES!
WHAT PRICE GLORY?
WHAT PRICE SANITY?
WHAT PRICE EGGS ON ZENN-LA?
MR. FANTASTICAL...
HMMM...I FORGOT THE GAMMA-POWERED, VIBRANIUM-ENHANCED MAP FOLDER-UPPER!
THIS SPACE FOR RENT
THE BOAST...
SAY, THIS WEIGHTY TOME ISN'T ABOUT STUPOR-HEROES!
WORLD'S GREATEST WATCH-IT!
NO-ZOOM
G.B. SHAW MAN AND SUPER MAN
I KNEW I SHOULD HAVE PURCHASED THAT NEW ONE BY DR. RUTH!
AND (WHEW) THE PULVERIZER...
MY WORST NIGHTMARE HAS COME TRUE!
I'M TRAPPED IN A STRIP WITH MARVEL'S MOST LONG-WINDED CHARACTERS!
IF U CAN READ THIS U.R. TOO CLOSE!
AVERT YOUR EYES, ALL! ONLY I MAY GAZE UPON THIS!
HEY, I...
ALAS! THIS IS NOT A WORD BALLOON!
BONK
OH, "VOYEUR EYES ONLY" EH, WATCH-MAN?
BOAST! THEY'RE SO COLD! SO OBSCURE! SO UN-HUMAN!
YOU MEAN THE WATCHMAN AND THE BURPER?
NO! YOUR PUNS!
I... WHO RIDE THE COSMOS! I... WHO POSSESS THE POWER COSMIC!
I... NEED A GOOD BOARD WAX!
I THINK THAT'S A SCREAM!
AND IT'S ONE WHICH WE DARE NOT IGNORE!
WHAT MAKES YOU SAY THAT?
EEE
EEEEEEEEEEEEEK!!!
ARE YOU KIDDING? LOOK AT THE SIZE OF THAT TYPE!
"IF OBSESSION IS A CRIME, LET ME BE GUILTY!"


HALP! HALP!
OH, BOY: A SOCIOPATH!
WAIT!
WE MUST PONDER EXISTENTIAL QUESTIONS FIRST!
KAFKA KAFKA
WOW! WATTA BABE!
WOW! WATTA GUN!
QUESTIONS LIKE...
WHY DOESN'T MANKIND EVER USE TRUST OR COMPASSION?
OR EVEN MORE PUZZLING:
WHY DOESN'T MIKE BARON EVER USE BOLD FACE?
SAYYY... NICE FX!
BURPER'S RIGHT! WE MUST PONTIFICATE FOR A FEW MORE PANELS!
DO WE DARE IMPOSE...
BUT...
A MORAL IMPER-ATIVE...
BUT...
ON LESSER BEINGS...
BUT...
... TO USE OUR POWERS...
BUT...
ARE WE NOT OBLIGATED...
WORLDS WITHIN WORLDS WITHIN WORLDS...
I, AND I ALONE MUST SUFFER...
IS MAN NOT GOD?
IS KIRBY NOT GOD?
IS POTTS NOT BACK FROM LUNCH?!
BADAM BADAM BADAM
INTEL-LECTUAL PANSIES!
'NUFF SAID!
...BUT NOT 'NUFF DEAD!
BADAM-BADAM-BADAM
HALP! HALP!
CAN'T WE DIAL A 900-NUMBER AND VOTE ON THIS???
END

Marvel Age #78 (September 1989) checks in with X-editor Bob Harras, reflects on "Inferno" and looks ahead to *The Uncanny X-Men* #250.

X-TRA THE MUTANT REPORT X-TRA

VOLUME 4 "THE NEXT STEP IN NEWS EVOLUTION" NUMBER 5

BOB HARRAS INTERVIEW

Bob Harras as Mr. Sinister, from the original Marc Silvestri/Dan Green cover
Caricature by Steve Buccellato

MARVEL AGE MAGAZINE: How did you get involved in comic books?

BOB: I knew I wanted to get a job in publishing, so when I graduated from college I got a job offer at Harcourt and Brace as a sales rep. I hated the idea. I wanted an interesting job. So I came running down here, and knocked on the door and said, "Will you hire me?" I filled out an application and they said, "No, we have no openings." But the next day I got a phone call from Jim Shooter's secretary and she hired me.

MARVEL AGE MAGAZINE: Who did you work for?

BOB: First, I was Shooter's editorial assistant, then when Ralph Macchio was promoted to editor, three months after I started, I became his assistant and that lasted for about two years. Then I was promoted to managing editor and eventually got X-FACTOR to edit. A month after that, Denny O'Neil left staff and I got all of his books and the rest, as they say, is history.

MARVEL AGE MAGAZINE: Are you a "Hands on" type of editor?

BOB: Not too hands on. You hire people because you trust them. The only time I am "hands on" is in the plotting stage. I have a very definite idea as to where the books should go. I usually ask the writer for a six month or a year long story outline, so that I can see where the books are going. If I approve that, then I pretty much sit back for the rest of the things, therefore I work very hard

MARVEL AGE MAGAZINE: What was it like doing "Inferno"?

BOB: It was fun. It worked out fine. But there were times when we would get lost and have to call each other up and say, "Well, where is the baby supposed to be now?" or "What are the New Mutants doing?" But, like I said it really came out well. We accomplished the things we wanted to do like getting rid of Madelyne Pryor and changing the status quo of Illyana.

MARVEL AGE MAGAZINE: Will there be anymore "Inferno" type crossovers in the future?

BOB: NO! NO! NO! Seriously, this one was planned to be the last one for a while. There is no crossover planned for next year

MARVEL AGE MAGAZINE: Are you happy with the way the X-Men and X-Factor relate to one another now?

BOB: Yeah, they both are living for the dream, Xavier's dream, but they both have different parts to play. Now they both know that they are alive. It would have been difficult to sustain belief past this

year, I think, if they hadn't met. It should probably have been earlier. But because of storylines and the way things were going we just put it off for this year.

MARVEL AGE MAGAZINE: Are there any plans to bring back Prof. Xavier?

BOB: Yes, I don't know exactly when. The original plan is for him to return in X-FACTOR #50. Since we are making Magneto a bad guy again, we need a balance for him.

MARVEL AGE MAGAZINE: Who will be the permanent artist on X-FACTOR?

BOB: I'm not sure at this point. Art Adams has done two issues. Rob Liefeld is doing a couple of issues. Walt Simonson might come back for three more.

MARVEL AGE MAGAZINE: What is ahead for X-Factor?

BOB: At some point they will end up in the Savage Land. They will explore the origins of the ship that they got from Apocalypse, which will take them into outer space, where they will tangle with some cosmic beings; as they find out where the ship actually comes from and where Apocalypse got it.

MARVEL AGE MAGAZINE: Will Apocalypse be popping up anytime soon?

BOB: No, not for the foreseeable future. We used him a lot last year and we don't want to overdo him.

MARVEL AGE MAGAZINE: What will be going on between Scott and Jean?

BOB: They're America's favorite couple (Laughs). I don't know what's going to happen next. I don't think they are going to be getting married anytime soon. We may put them a little bit in the background since it has been "Scott and Jean" since the beginning and we would like to explore the others, like Warren, what's it like for him to be Archangel. Iceman might find a romantic interest. Scott will be dealing with the fact that he has a baby now with no wife and Jean has to deal with the fact that the baby is genetically hers . . . but she didn't give birth to it. And they all have to deal with the fact that they've got a lot of kids, the New Mutants and X-Terminators to take care of.

MARVEL AGE MAGAZINE: Will the baby exhibit any kind of powers?

BOB: He might. Remember, Sinister wanted him because he was genetically perfect. He might be up there with Franklin Richards (son of Reed and Sue Richards of the Fantastic Four.) as far as mutant potential goes.

MARVEL AGE MAGAZINE: What about Mister Sinister?

BOB: He's a tough guy to kill. There is more to him than meets the eye. It will be a while before we see him again.

MARVEL AGE MAGAZINE: Since the New Mutants will now be living with the X-Terminators and X-Factor are there any plans for crossovers between those two books?

BOB: Maybe, maybe not. I don't think we will have direct crossovers. It would be easy to do since Weezie (Louise Simonson) is writing both books. But I think a little more independance (for the New Mutants) for now is what they need.

MARVEL AGE MAGAZINE: Are the X-Men going to continue to operate

This page: illustrations by Art Adams and Al Milgrom for X-FACTOR.

out of Australia?

BOB: For a while. We have this whole scenario coming up where we are going to use the Siege Perilous, which was something we introduced during the Fall of the Mutants. It hasn't been used since. People are thrown through and start a new life. In #250 the X-Men will be attacked by someone from their past...a member of the Hellfire Club. They will be experiencing some problems and then we'll start a whole new storyline in X-MEN #251, which will surprise some people. It will start in Australia but it certainly won't end there. We're calling it "The Search for the X-Men" or something equally mysterious.

MARVEL AGE MAGAZINE: Will the X-Men still be "dead" to the world?

BOB: They'll be changed. I don't know if they'll still be "dead" at this point. But they will still be legends.

MARVEL AGE MAGAZINE: Will we be seeing the Hellfire Club anytime soon?

BOB: Yes, at least one of them is going to make a move against the X-Men before #250. They are definitely going to start moving again because the Hellfire Club for the past four years has been the most evil organization on the face of the earth that does absolutely nothing. (Laughter). There will be a story in the New Mutants involving Amara's country, Nova Roma, and the Hellfire Club will be involved in that.

MARVEL AGE MAGAZINE: Okay, let's turn to Wolverine and his book. Will he be staying in Madripoor?

BOB: Yes, for a little bit. We are going to have an upcoming story with Mariko; that will explore their relationship. We haven't seen the two of them together for a long time and they have both changed. Wolverine is now Patch and Mariko is the head of a crime organization and Wolverine seems to be getting close to Tyger Tiger. So I think it is time to explore all of that when the book along with THE X-MEN, goes bi-weekly for the summer.

MARVEL AGE MAGAZINE: Will Wolverine be meeting up with any other Marvel characters?

BOB: Yes, probably by the time this is out he will have fought the Hulk. As it stands now there are plans to bring Jean Grey in for an issue to do a "Casablanca"-type story. We also have plans for Archangel to battle Wolverine. It's, basically, anyone we can get to Madripoor.

MARVEL AGE MAGAZINE: Is Wolverine going to get his own annual this year?

A scene from the upcoming FALLEN ANGELS Limited Series written by Joe Duffy, penciled by Colleen Doran, and inked by Terry Austin.

BOB: Yes, as of right now Walt Simonson will be the writer and Mike Mignola will be the penciler. Chris wanted to do it but he is just too busy.

MARVEL AGE MAGAZINE: What about the other annuals?

BOB: John Byrne will be writing and penciling the X-FACTOR ANNUAL. Terry Austin will be writing the X-MEN ANNUAL. Again, Chris would have loved to do it but is just too busy. Louise Simonson will most probably be the writer for THE NEW MUTANTS ANNUAL. All of the annuals will be tied into the Atlantis Attacks story that will be running through all of the Marvel annuals this summer.

MARVEL AGE MAGAZINE: Will there be any special limited series coming out?

BOB: The only thing in the works is a second FALLEN ANGELS Limited Series written by Jo Duffy, penciled by Colleen Doran, and inked by Terry Austin. It won't be out for a while. But other than that we have no plans for any more limited series in the immediate future.

MARVEL AGE MAGAZINE: Anything else you would like to say about any of the books?

BOB: Yeah, Buy them, make me rich. Just kidding. I just think that they are a lot of fun. I'm very happy with the direction that they are going in and I am very happy with the creative personnel. What else could an editor want?

–Eric Fein

Marvel: 1989 – The Year in Review (released in January 1990) began a six-year tradition of releasing *Time Magazine*-style reviews on the prior year's events in the Marvel Universe.

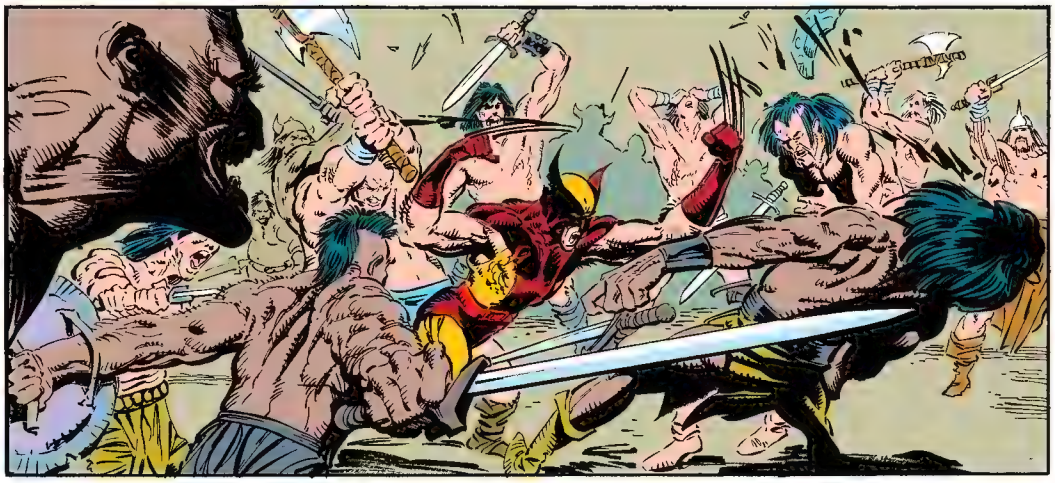
Milestones

X-Men: Ghosts, Or A New Machine?

The X-Men (from left to right): Havok, Rogue, Colossus, Storm, Wolverine, Shadowcat, Dazzler, and Longshot.

The X-MEN are dead.

A simple statement, and one you would think incontrovertible. Whether touted as heroes or feared as yet another example of the gene mutations at work among us, that they are dead would not seem open to discussion. Yet a series of circumstances and a list of "sightings" that rival in frequency UFO reports or encounters with Big Foot would indicate that this might



Days of future past: One of the heroic X-Men battles barbarians on the streets of Dallas.

not be the case.

The X-Men, a team of mutant super beings controversial in their own right, were allegedly brought to their death while fighting off the attack of yet another alleged pan-dimensional being, identified as the *Adversary*, in downtown Dallas last year. In a massive fight centered in the otherwise vacant Eagle Plaza skyscraper (and captured on live TV by National Public Radio correspondent *Neal Conan*) eight of the X-Men gave up their lives in order to stop the Adversary's rampage of destruction. Or did they?

"I don't see how they possibly could have come through that alive," Neal Conan, a sober, thoughtful reporter with years of experience under his belt, commented from his Washington, DC bureau office. "I've been in a lot of tense situations—the Persian Gulf, Nicaragua but I'd never seen anything like this before. One minute they were here, the next, gone. Now you may not like mutants, but they willingly gave themselves when others would have hesitated."

Forge was the only mutant present who apparently escaped unscathed. Medicine chief of the Cheyenne, he attributes the X-Men's deaths to a mystic force. When asked if they are dead, he says, "I felt them go." When asked if he killed them, he will only say, "I cast the spell . . . I couldn't be a part of it."

What was captured on tape and broadcast to millions throughout the world was a scene that froze the blood in America's veins, bringing home for perhaps the first time the malevolence and danger now present among us. A creature impossible to describe save as the embodiment of evil was destroyed by Forge. The X-Men (and a human companion, *Madelyne Pryor*) were seen to be transformed into pure light, matter converted into energy. That energy was then hurled at the creature, and the creature was no more. Nor were the X-Men.

But then who or what are the individuals who are sighted —or leave their calling card —at hot spots around the globe? Are they imposters, ghosts, or yet another manifestation of this mutant plague?

"It was the oddest thing," Neal Conan fanned through a group of photos on his desk. "A few months after the mess in Dallas, there was a situation in downtown Denver, and also out at Red Rocks Amphitheater. No one's quite sure what happened, but after the network coverage of Dallas, people on the scene are sure they spotted the X-Men. People, reputable reporters, take pictures, but when they're developed, nothing's there. You tell me: Would they make this stuff up?"

Conan's become the unofficial archivist for these bizarre events. Perhaps because of his close association with their "deaths," or because of his world-wide news net, people now contact Conan when they think they've seen the legendary figures. "There've been sightings from Beverly Hills to Madripoor, in New York City and the Australian outback. These guys get around more than Elvis!"

But if the X-Men are dead, why have there been so many sightings? Why will the public not allow them to rest in peace?

"The X-Men have assumed mythic proportions," commented *Jane Yolen*, noted folklorist and professor at Smith College. "Perhaps because of their very public deaths, perhaps because they belong to a persecuted minority, the public exhibits guilt over the X-Men's heroic sacrifice, and can't let them go. I believe the X-Men *are* ghosts —but ghosts created by the public's conscience."

But then what about the incident in Australia? Condemned world wide for its racist regime of oppression, the

Those who perhaps would know best whether the X-Men are alive or dead are their fellow mutants, those who have worked with them and who would have deeper insight into this alien culture. However, when trying to contact *Nightcrawler* and *Shadowcat*, the two X-Men who escaped death in Dallas, they could not be found. The lonely, isolated lighthouse they inhabit off the west coast of Britain is now under the jurisdiction of the Weird Happenings Organization affiliated with the British Government, and they would not comment. X-FACTOR, a sister-group to the X-Men, has not been seen for some time.

Peas from the same pod?
Rumors link "Patch" of Madripoor to Wolverine of the X-Men.

island nation of Genosha faces sanctions for exercising the harshest control over its mutant population. Outlawed Genoshan magistrates (a paramilitary cadre detailed to the arrest and capture of mutants) fought a pitched battle in downtown Sydney with local law enforcement units. Insiders with the police say they were aided by the X-Men, who left a graffiti-tag of their logo behind. But were they really there?

"I don't believe so" ventured Yolen. "Especially in this case, which is so clearly linked to the Mutant Movement, which the X-Men championed. I think what we're seeing here is 'X-Men' being adopted as the personification of this movement, just as the character of Robin Hood stands as a champion of the poor fighting against the oppression of the rich. Why, there are X-Men tags all over Brooklyn!"

To prove her point, Yolen mentions the X-Men sighting at Hollywood Mall. "A young girl was causing a disturbance, setting off fireworks inside the mall. Mall security guards chased her, afraid of the danger her fireworks posed. She 'disappeared into thin air.' Now there's talk the girl was a mutant, and also that four young women were seen helping her, said to be *Storm*, *Dazzler*, *Rogue* and *Psylocke* of the X-Men. Not only did they too appear and disappear in thin air, but someone noted that Storm, the taciturn leader of the X-Men, was dancing with an exotic male dancer, in typical California-chic clothes and make-up. I've studied Storm's character over the years, and this certainly would not be the case. Clearly now, the X-Men are seen as the 'guardian angels,' if you will, of mutants and others in trouble with the system."

Noted Nobel Prize-winning geneticist *Moira MacTaggert* has a different, and more sinister, view of this phenomenon. "It has come to my attention that in the more recent X-Men sightings, the one in New York City in particular, the 'X-Men' have been said to act in a more erratic and hostile manner. In recent years we have seen the rise of combat cyborgs (the mating of man and machine to increase fire-power). The so-called REAVERS are a worst-case example that comes to mind. I am afraid that these 'X-Men' may be just that, and are using this masquerade to cloak their true intent."

What does the death of the X-Men mean for our universe? *C.S. Claremont*, a commentator for the last fifteen years on mutant affairs, made this uncharacteristically emotional reply: "What the X-Men did was noble and necessary. If there was any justice in the world, they'd come back for a second chance."

But if there is one thing we have learned from the Adversary, it is that our universe is not just. **– Max Fleisher/New York**

High noon at midnight: Downtown Dallas experienced this violation of the laws of nature on the day the X-Men died.

Unabridged X

THE STRUCTURE AND FUNCTION OF X
by Charles Xavier

Anti-mutant hysteria, mutant registration, the super powers registration act, Genosha . . . all of these were foreseen by *Professor Charles Xavier* in the supressed sections of his only book, *The Structure and Function of X*, now commercially available in its entirety for the first time.

Originally published (in a highly abridged form), as *The Structure and Function of the X Factor as it relates to Human Genetic Potential*, it was viewed as an important work in gene sequencing, and still serves as a textbook for graduate courses on human mutation. That book, however, was less than half of the one Xavier sent to his publisher in the late fifties. The original was a hodgepodge of genetics, social theory, psychology, philosophy, mantic leaps and political agendas.

Appearing in the age of positivism and scientific purism, it was seen as a throwback to the early days of science, when such mixed books were commonplace. Thus, the original publishers, *National Timely Atlas Books*, though impressed with Xavier's genetic work, were so scandalized by his "indiscretion" that they excised over two-thirds of the book, reducing it to a dry science text.

This did not stop the circulation of the unabridged work. Pirate copies lay beside *Siddhartha*, *Das Kapital* and *Being and Time* on the night stands of many radical college students in the sixties, and copies of "X" were carried by students at the infamous riot at *Kent State College* where three pro-mutant demonstrators were shot by Vault guardsmen.

In the seventies, the full book was supposed to be released by *Worthington Books*, but National Timely Atlas Books was able to put a stop to that plan. However, their rights have finally lapsed and now *Magnus Publishing* brings out the complete work. We can see clearly how prophetic Xavier's words were, especially his fear of large scale anti-mutant hysteria and mutant enslavement. These fears were not the most controversial ideas in his book.

The most controversial of Xavier's ideas, and most central to his premise, is the construct labeled "X." This biological/ psychological/ sociological

entity might best be described as the "other" (i.e. anything which is alien) and the reaction it engenders. In biological terms, X is the interaction of the mutant gene with the organism as a whole. It is thus a holistic interaction, and not a specific site on the gene map, which constitutes X. In its psychological moment, X is the individual reacting to him or herself as a mutant. Similarly, X is also the situation of the mutant in society. For Xavier, X can be a positive interaction, wherein the organism/self/society adjusts to and benefits from the other (which Xavier calls the X factor), or the interaction can be harmful. In biology, this is evinced by the "fatal gene." 99% of mutations are of this sort; the organism responds to the mutation by self termination. The psychological parallel is the self which cannot accept itself as a mutant. While the biological form of negative X was thought by Xavier to be untreatable, he believed that an individual could be helped in coming to terms with her or his mutant ability. In the same way, he thought that societies could learn to accept mutants and benefit from their special abilities.

These benefits were first realized by Xavier in the mutant super heroes, the *X-Men*, who valiantly gave their lives to save the world. (See "X-Men: Ghosts, Or A New Machine?" article in this magazine.) Xavier hoped that this sort of willfull cooperation between humans and mutants could stave off what he believed to be the greatest threat to mutants, the posibility of their enslavement and exploitation. His book proposes a plan to set up a chain of schools which would help young mutants learn how to use their powers for the common good. He believed that these students could eventually be "mainsteamed," with public schools having special mutant education programs. When this phase of human-mutant relations would be reached, Xavier believed that all anti-mutant prejudice would be reduced to a minor crackpot fringe.

Hopefully, the ready availability of this book will bring the mainstream reader in contact with Xavier's dream, opening their minds and helping us escape from his nightmare. **—review by Hank McCoy Phd.**

Yellow Cape, No Pants

SIDEKICK
by Rick Jones

If you're looking for some great beach reading, try this new autobiography by rock star/kid sidekick/ super hero *Rick Jones*. I don't know how much of it can be believed (did Rick really single-handedly stop an outer space war?) but who cares! I haven't had this much fun since *Janet Van Dyne's* tell-all exposé on the sex lives of the super endowed.

If Rick is to be believed, he was an auxilary member of the AVENGERS, heading a "teen brigade" of ham radio operators who would report trouble to their super-heroic friends. Next, he became *Captain America's* kid sidekick, replacing "*Bucky*" in role and costume. Later, he claims he shared space with *Captain Marvel* (the original one, kids!) and that only one of them could exist in this dimension at a time. And, oh yeah, he's also responsible for causing *Dr. Bruce Banner* to become the *Hulk*.

Well, if you believe that, I've got some great real estate in Latveria I'd like to sell you, and Rick has some more great tales he'd love to tell you! I don't want to spoil the fun, so run out and pick up a copy of this breezily written tome before it's censored by the reality police! **—review by April May**

Homefront

Freedom Force Operatives Killed

FREEDOM FORCE, the U.S. government-sponsored super-powered organization, suffered serious casualties late this year in a pitched battle off the coast of Scotland.

Though details of the conflict are sketchy, it is known that two members of Freedom Force—known only as *Destiny* and *Stonewall*—were killed in the melee, while a third operative, *Avalanche*, was seriously injured. The conflict, which took place on and around tiny Muir Island, apparently also involved the cyborg terrorist group, the REAVERS. There were no body counts on their side though it is reported that they suffered more severe losses than Freedom Force did.

Though government sanctioned, Freedom Force has come under fire from the world press in the past for their questionable tactics, and for the fact that they formerly called themselves the BROTHERHOOD of EVIL MUTANTS.

"What can we do but press on?", *Dr. Valerie Cooper*, Special Assistant to the President's National Security Adviser and supervisor of Freedom Force, said at a press conference shortly following the fracas. "Perhaps we will find replacement members for our fallen comrades . . . time will tell. I do know that Stonewall and Destiny died for their country."

The remaining members of Freedom Force are *Mystique*, *Blob*, *Pyro*, *Crimson Commando*, and the recovering *Avalanche*. ■

Freedom Force battling the Avengers several years ago.

December 1989–January 1990 subscription ad
by Marc Silvestri

UNCANNY X-MAS SAVINGS!
First title full price . . . each additional title 50% off!
Mailed flat in protective polybags. Offer expires January 31, 1990.

Spurred on by the record-breaking popularity of Chris Claremont and Jim Lee's *X-Men* run, in 1992, *The Uncanny X-Men* #248 received a second printing with a gold ink background.

Marvel Press Poster #63 – *Mutants* (1989)
by Arthur Adams & Linda Medley

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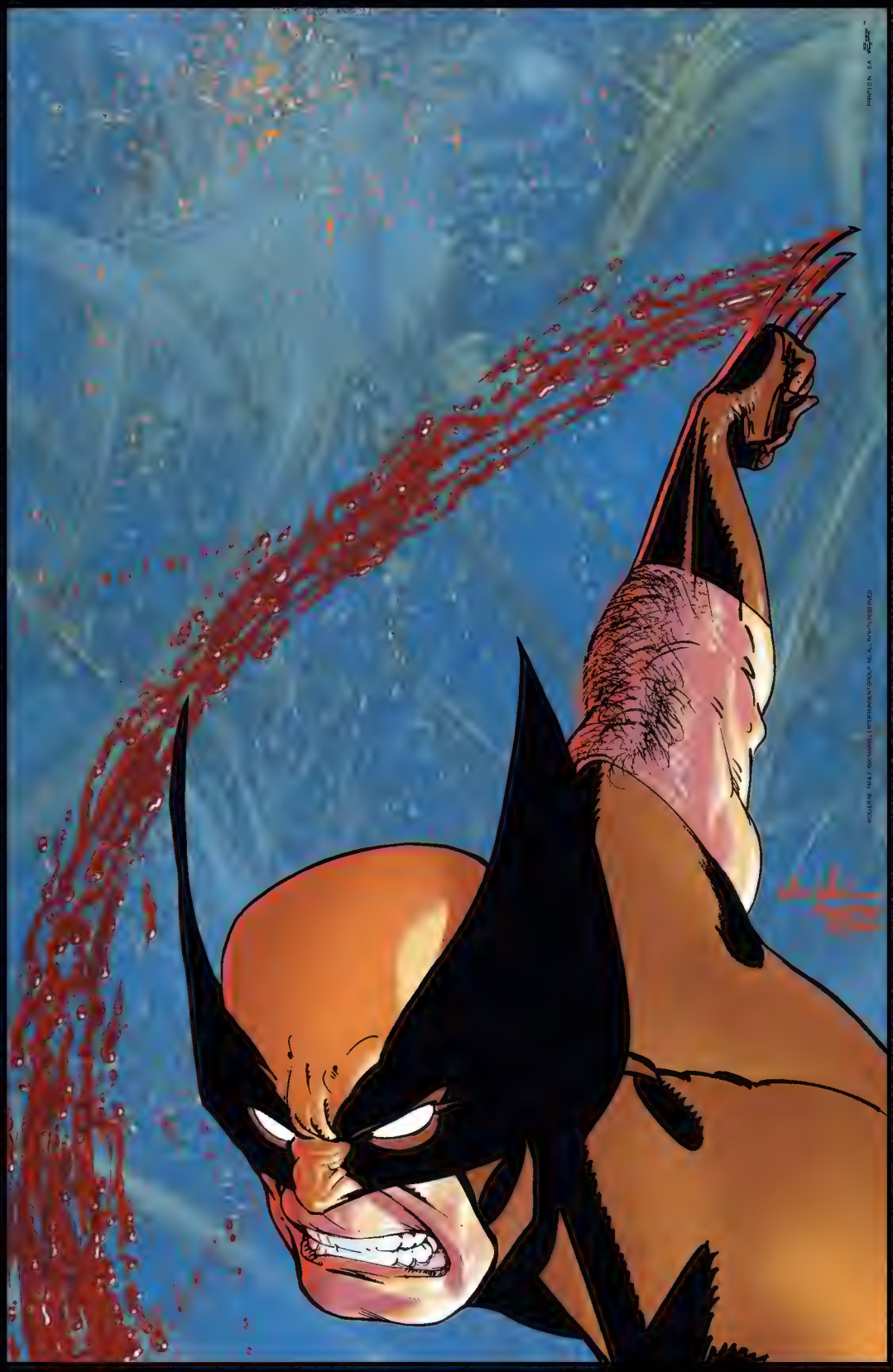
Marvel Fanfare #45 (August 1989) the all-pinup issue cover
by John Byrne

Marvel Fanfare #45 (August 1989) Wolverine pinup
by Howard Chaykin & Richard Ory

Marvel Press Poster #73 – *Wolverine* (1990)
by Howard Chaykin & Richard Ory



Marvel Fanfare #45 (August 1989) Shadowcat pinup
by Michael Wm. Kaluta & Elaine Lee

Marvel Fanfare #45 (August 1989) Colossus pinup
by Rick Leonardi, Dan Green & Christie Scheele

Marvel Fanfare #45 (August 1989) X-Men pinup
by Marshall Rogers & Petra Scotese

Marvel Fanfare #45 (August 1989) Storm pinup
by Barry Windsor-Smith

Jim Lee rocketed to superstar artist status in 1988-89 with his work on *The Punisher War Journal* (co-starring Wolverine in issues #6-7). He leapt directly from that assignment to *The Uncanny X-Men*.

In 1989, First Team Press released *The Wolverine/The Punisher: A Bad Night for the Ninjas* (1989), a signed and numbered diptych print set limited to 2500 copies | Original art by Jim Lee

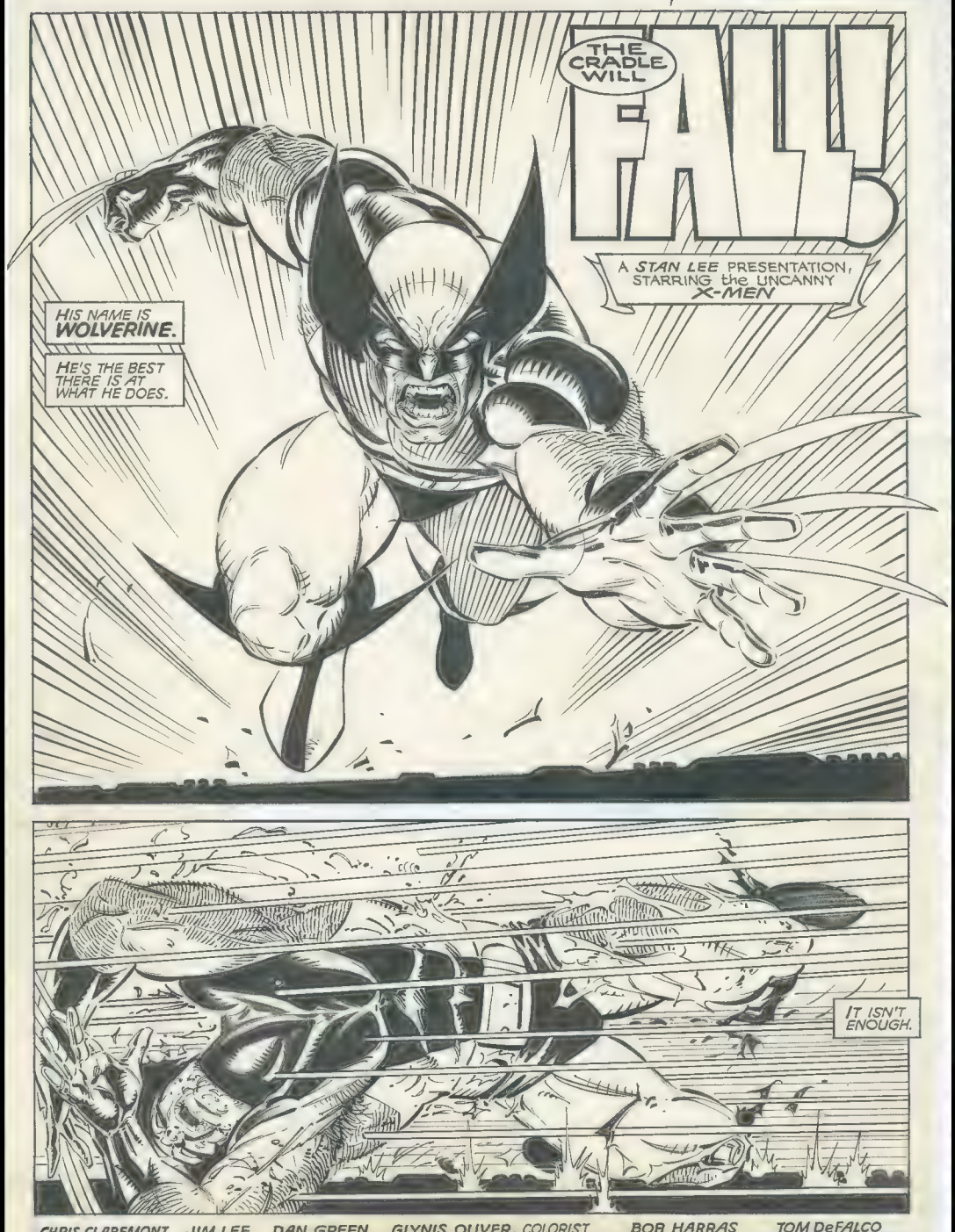
Courtesy HeritageAuctions.com

The Uncanny X-Men #248 cover original art
by Jim Lee & Dan Green

Courtesy HeritageAuctions.com

The Uncanny X-Men #248 page 1 original art
by Jim Lee & Dan Green

X-MEN 248


THE CRADLE WILL
FALL!
A STAN LEE PRESENTATION, STARRING the UNCANNY X-MEN
HIS NAME IS WOLVERINE.
HE'S THE BEST THERE IS AT WHAT HE DOES.
IT ISN'T ENOUGH.

CHRIS CLAREMONT WRITER | JIM LEE PENCILER | DAN GREEN INKER | GLYNIS OLIVER, COLORIST TOM ORZECHOWSKI, LETTERER | BOB HARRAS EDITOR | TOM DeFALCO LORD HIGH EXECUTIONER

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Courtesy Scott Dunbier

The Uncanny X-Men #248 page 9 original art
by Jim Lee & Dan Green

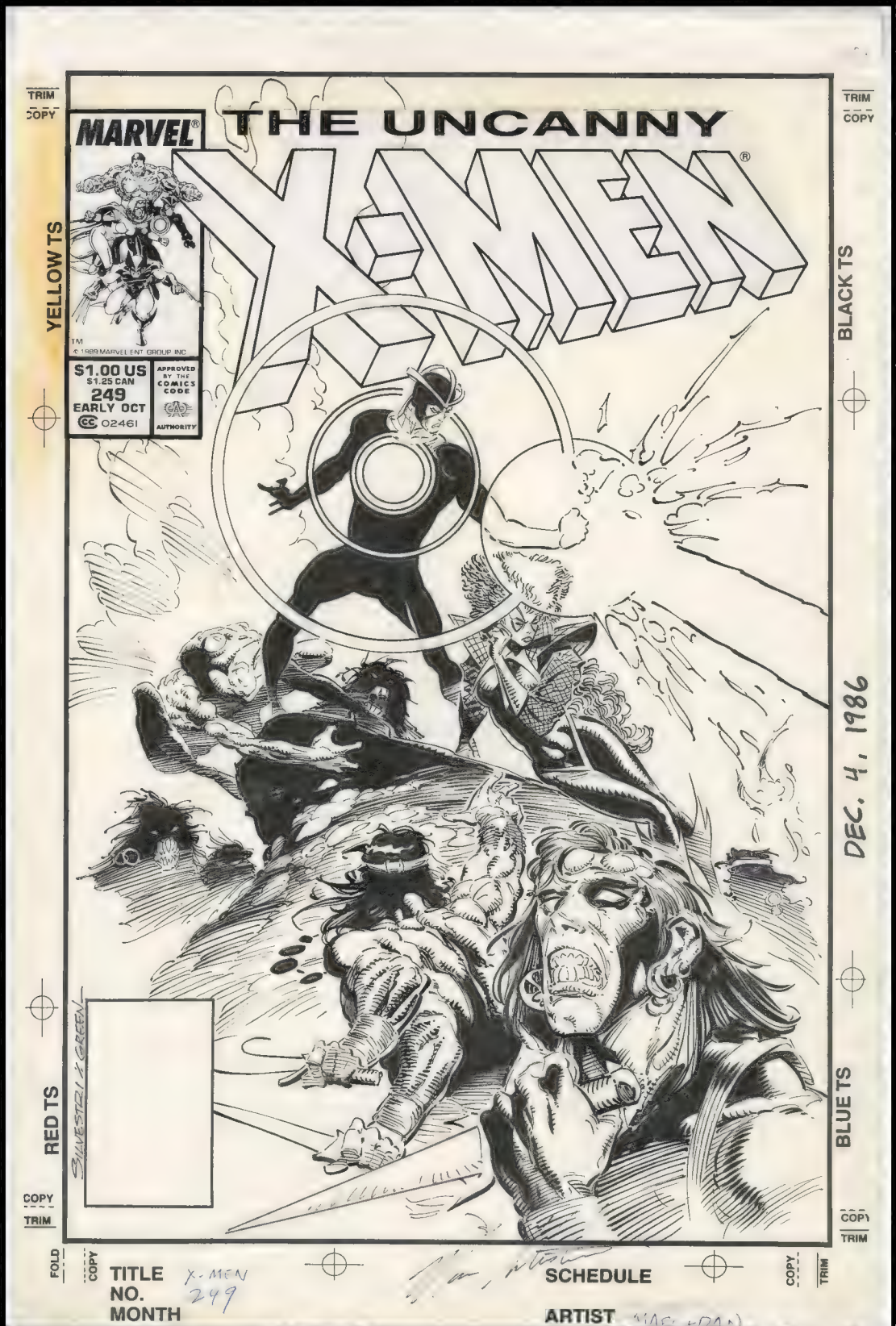
X-MEN
248
ELSEWHERE.
TOO MANY HOLES...
...FOR A PERSON TO BE WHOLE.
THERE HAS TO BE MORE OF ME SOMEWHERE.
THEY LOOK SCARY.
AND WELL THEY SHOULD.
SEE WHAT LIFE HAS DONE TO THESE POOR MUTANTS, PETER--
--FORCED THEM TO CAST ASIDE THEIR HUMANITY, UNTIL THEY'RE NO LONGER PEOPLE...
...BUT LIVING WEAPONS--LEGENDS!
I GUESS I BETTER GO FIND IT.
I DON'T WANT TO LEAVE, STORM--
--YOU'RE MY FRIENDS--
--BUT I CAN'T BE YOUR FRIEND...
... TILL THERE'S AN "ALL" OF ME TO BE.
IS THAT SO BAD, NANNY?
I BET THEY'RE SO TOUGH, NOBODY CAN HURT THEM!
WOULD THAT WERE SO, MY ANGEL.
THE CRUELEST HURTS ARE OFTEN THE ONES HIDDEN INSIDE US.
BUT HURT THEY'LL BE, AND SLAIN AS WELL, IF WE DON'T DO SOMETHING.
NANNY, THEY'RE NOT CHILDREN, THEY'RE ALL GROWED UP!
SILLY BOY, THEY ONLY LOOK THAT WAY.
AND NANNY CAN FIX THAT.
LIKE NANNY FIXES EVERYTHING.

Courtesy HeritageAuctions.com

The Uncanny X-Men #248 page 21 original art
by Jim Lee & Dan Green

Courtesy HeritageAuctions.com

The Uncanny X-Men #249 cover original art
by Marc Silvestri & Dan Green



Courtesy Scott Dunbier

The Uncanny X-Men #250 cover original art
by Marc Silvestri & Dan Green

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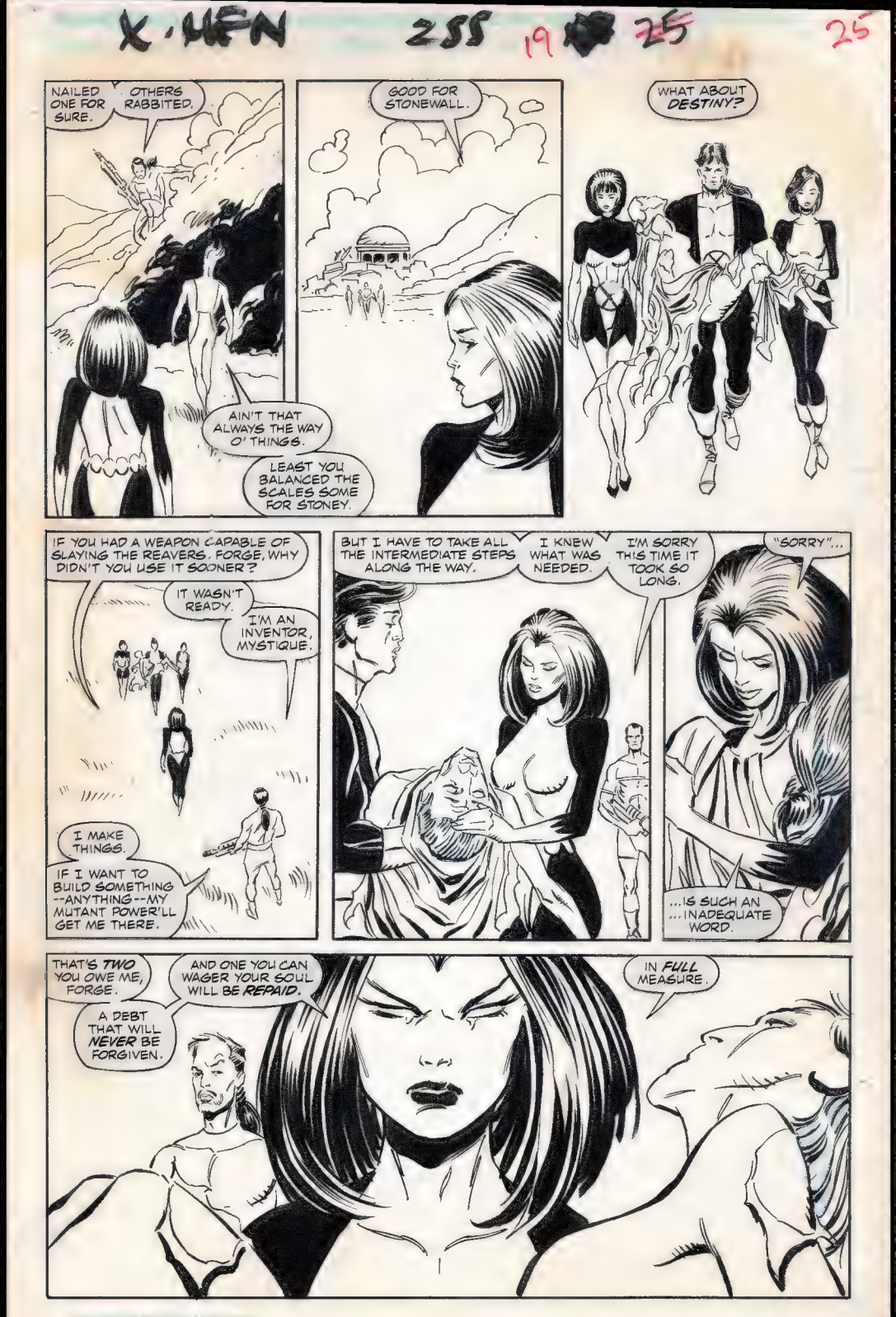
The Uncanny X-Men #251 page 4 original art
by Marc Silvestri & Dan Green

Courtesy HeritageAuctions.com

The Uncanny X-Men #255 page 19 original art
by Marc Silvestri & Dan Green


X-MEN 255 19 25
NAILED ONE FOR SURE.
OTHERS RABBITED.
AIN'T THAT ALWAYS THE WAY O' THINGS.
LEAST YOU BALANCED THE SCALES SOME FOR STONEY.
GOOD FOR STONEWALL.
WHAT ABOUT DESTINY?
IF YOU HAD A WEAPON CAPABLE OF SLAYING THE REAVERS, FORGE, WHY DIDN'T YOU USE IT SOONER?
IT WASN'T READY.
I'M AN INVENTOR, MYSTIQUE.
I MAKE THINGS.
IF I WANT TO BUILD SOMETHING --ANYTHING-- MY MUTANT POWER'LL GET ME THERE.
BUT I HAVE TO TAKE ALL THE INTERMEDIATE STEPS ALONG THE WAY.
I KNEW WHAT WAS NEEDED.
I'M SORRY THIS TIME IT TOOK SO LONG.
"SORRY"...
...IS SUCH AN ...INADEQUATE WORD.
THAT'S TWO YOU OWE ME, FORGE.
A DEBT THAT WILL NEVER BE FORGIVEN.
AND ONE YOU CAN WAGER YOUR SOUL WILL BE REPAID.
IN FULL MEASURE.

Courtesy James Dornoff

BIOGRAPHIES

CHRIS CLAREMONT

It is hard to remember a time when the word "mutant" didn't correspond with the largest and most ardently followed franchise in comics, but in the mid-'70s the X-Men were naught but a forgotten team of misfits. Chris Claremont and his collaborators took this moribund property and issue by issue transformed it into a phenomenon now known the world over.

Claremont began his career in comics in the early '70s pitching in on issues of *Avengers*, *Daredevil* and *Incredible Hulk*, while also delivering several text stories to Marvel's black-and-white magazines. His first regular writing gig was *War Is Hell*, a "weird war" title that came to a close just as his run on *X-Men* and *Iron Fist* began. *Iron Fist*, which rolled out of the pages of *Marvel Premiere*, was done in concert with artist John Byrne, forming a key partnership that would pay big dividends later. Other high-profile projects from Claremont's first full decade in comics included *Marvel Preview*'s Starlord, *Ms. Marvel*, *Marvel Team-Up* (again with Byrne) and *John Carter: Warlord of Mars*.

But it was in the pages of *X-Men* where Claremont would change comics history. In tandem with artists Dave Cockrum and John Byrne, Claremont helped build a cornerstone franchise for Marvel. After writer Len Wein launched the newly updated series in 1975 with *Giant-Size X-Men* #1, Claremont was tasked with guiding the new adventures of the mutant misfits, and he did so by crafting layered stories that balanced crisp dialogue with high-octane action. Claremont placed a premium on characterization, a lofty goal in a team book with many players, but he did so deftly enough to spin a wide-ranging tapestry of characters, each of whom became fan favorites.

Leading breathless fans down the path of classics including "The Dark Phoenix Saga," "Days of Future Past," and *God Loves, Man Kills*, he helped build such an intense loyalty that it only made sense to spin-off the X-Men's success into new books. The first such spin-off was *The New Mutants*. Later in the decade, Claremont launched *Excalibur* with Alan Davis and established a regular series for Wolverine with John Buscema.

In 1990, he launched a new sister title for the main team of mutants with Jim Lee; *X-Men* #1 premiered to numbers that made it the highest-selling comic ever. After a long break from the company, Claremont returned to Marvel in 2000, and over the next ten years wrote the novelization of Bryan Singer's X-Men film, took on the Fantastic Four, and charted the adventures of Marvel's mutants across a variety of titles. He was inducted into the Eisner Hall of Fame with its 2015 class.

MARC SILVESTRI

Born in Florida in 1958, Marc Silvestri grew up with a love for comics and science fiction movies that inspired him to become a comic book artist. He developed his skills well enough that by the age of 23, he attended a convention to try to gauge interest in his work. DC vice president and veteran artist Joe Orlando was impressed enough with the young Silvestri's portfolio that he hired him to draw backup stories in DC's horror anthologies. Silvestri jumped over to Marvel soon after, settling in for a long run on *King Conan/Conan the King*, after which he illustrated the Marvel Graphic Novel *Revenge of the Living Monolith*, issues of *X-Factor* and *Web of Spider-Man*. In 1987, he established himself as one of the defining artists of the X-Men, first with the *X-Men vs. The Avengers* miniseries, then an iconic run drawing *The Uncanny X-Men* that would last through 1990. He followed that up with a two-year stint on *Wolverine* that delved deeper into the character's origins. In the summer of 1992, Silvestri and six of his peers shocked the comics industry by leaving Marvel and forming Image Comics, a creator-owned independent publishing company. Under his Image imprint Top Cow, he created and drew *Cyberforce*, joined by brother Eric as scripter, and scripted the spinoff series *Codename: Stryke Force*. In 1995, he co-created *The Darkness* with writer Garth Ennis and *Witchblade*, a property that Silvestri helped develop into its own popular 2001-2002 TV series on the TNT network. Silvestri returned to Marvel in 2004, drawing *New X-Men* "Here Comes Tomorrow," the conclusion to Grant Morrison's revolutionary run. Since then, Silvestri has contributed to the X-Men events "Messiah Complex" and "Utopia," issues of Jason Aaron's *The Incredible Hulk* series and dozens of covers for Marvel.

TERRY AUSTIN

A man of many creative talents, Terry Austin's fame has come primarily from his inking work, with an astounding set of credits that made him one of the definitive delineators of his era. Born and raised in Detroit, Michigan, during his adolescence, Austin came to love comics including DC's late-'50s titles and the emerging Marvel Universe. While attending Wayne State University, an art teacher gave him a stash of old EC Comics, further inspiring the budding artist. In the mid-'70s, he moved to New York with the goal of painting covers to paperback novels, but he soon joined up with Neal Adams' Crusty Bunkers and honed his craft as an assistant for Dick Giordano. Austin soon began picking up inking work at both Marvel and DC, including his first ongoing title, *Captain Marvel*. He also worked on the Batman family of books at DC, where his collaborations with penciler Marshall Rogers would gain wide acclaim. In 1977, he took on *The X-Men*, arriving at the same time as artist John Byrne. The team of Chris Claremont, Byrne and Austin raised the franchise to historic popularity with "The Dark Phoenix Saga" and "Days of Future Past." When Byrne left the series, Austin did as well, reuniting with Rogers on *Doctor Strange*. He also inked Walter Simonson's pencils on the hit Marvel/DC crossover between the X-Men and the New Teen Titans. In 1983, he notched his first writing credit with *Power Pack* #21. Not long after, Austin became the writer of Cloak and Dagger in the *Strange Tales* anthology title and their subsequent solo series. As the '90s progressed, Austin notched inking credits in *The Amazing Spider-Man*, *Wonder Man* and *Warlock and the Infinity Watch* at Marvel and *Legends of the Dark Knight* at DC. In 1995, he wrote and inked an adaptation of Alan Dean Foster's *Star Wars* novel *Splinter of the Mind's Eye* for Dark Horse. In the late

'90s, he was regular inker on DC's *Superman Adventures* and *Green Lantern*, and in 2002, he began a fifteen-year run inking *Sonic the Hedgehog* for Archie Comics.

KYLE BAKER

Born in 1965, Kyle Baker was only 20 years old when he broke into comics as a Marvel intern and swiftly begin notching art credits. His first big project was the adaptation of the 1986 *Howard the Duck* film. He would balance his inking work at Marvel with an ongoing gig penciling and inking *The Shadow* at DC. He would further collaborate with *Shadow* writer Andy Helfer on the prestige limited series *Justice, Inc.* In the '90s, Baker would expand his creative pursuits significantly, adapting Lewis Carroll's *Through the Looking-Glass* for *Classics Illustrated*, and writing and drawing the graphic novels *Why I Hate Saturn* and *You Are Here* for DC imprints, the latter of which saw Baker at the forefront of adopting digital techniques to comic book making. It also won him an Eisner Award, the first of eight he has accrued over his career. He began to have some of his cartoon work published in major magazines and also directed an animated music video for hip-hop artist KRS-One. In the 2000s, Baker returned to Marvel to draw the limited series *Truth: Red, White & Black* and adapted the Biblical story of David in the Vertigo graphic novel *King David*. In 2003, Baker launched an ongoing *Plastic Man* series that he both wrote and illustrated. He also collaborated with *Boondocks* cartoonist Aaron McGruder and film director/writer Reginald Hudlin on a contemporary political satire *Birth of a Nation: A Comic Novel*, published by Crown. He started his own publishing company, Kyle Baker Publishing, in 2007 and released *Nat Turner*, a four-part historical account of an enslaved man who rebelled. In 2009, he contributed a Hawkman strip to DC's *Wednesday Comics*. Later that year, he began an association with Deadpool, illustrating stories over a handful of titles and then launching *Deadpool MAX* and a sequel series with writer David Lapham.

JON BOGDANOVE

Illustrator Jon Bogdanove started his career in comics in 1986 with a six-year stretch at Marvel that saw him drawing an extended run of *Power Pack*, during which he also scripted a handful of issues. He united with his *Power Pack* collaborator, Louise Simonson, on the mutant miniseries *X-Terminators* and *X-Factor*. He also drew the four issue *Fantastic Four vs. The X-Men* miniseries scripted by Chris Claremont. Bogdanove moved to DC in 1991 to pursue his ambition to draw Superman. His love for the first super hero was so strong that he and his wife named their son Kal-El, Superman's Kryptonian name. Bogdanove would contribute to the death and return of Superman and marriage of Clark Kent and Lois Lane story lines that captured headlines worldwide. With Simonson on board writing, Bogdanove launched *Superman: The Man of Steel*, which the pair would collaborate on through the end of the decade. He and Simonson would co-create the character Steel in *Adventures of Superman*, and then featured him as the title character of their *Man of Steel* ongoing series, before he would springboard to a feature film starring basketball superstar Shaquille O'Neal. Bogdanove currently works in television animation, with credits on *Young Justice* and *Reign of the Supermen*.

KURT BUSIEK

Boston-born in 1960, Kurt Busiek began his pursuit of a career in comics by making his own comics with his high school friend (and future *Understanding Comics* creator) Scott McCloud. After interviewing DC Editor-in-Chief Dick Giordano for a college term paper, he was invited to pitch stories, one of which became a backup in *Green Lantern* #162 (March 1983). At roughly the same time, Busiek began writing *Power Man and Iron Fist*, though the bulk of his work for the '80s was spent at DC on *Justice League of America*, *Red Tornado* and *Legend of Wonder Woman*. In the '90s, he would shift his workload to Marvel, becoming a regular contributor to *What If?* and *What The--?!* and filling in on various titles in the Spider-Man stable. In 1993, Busiek adapted the film *Darkman* for Marvel while also scripting *Vampirella* for Harris Publications. But it was Busiek's work with newcomer artist Alex Ross on *Marvels*, the high-concept series that explored the Marvel Universe through the eyes of the common man, that established Busiek as a top writer. He then launched *Untold Tales of Spider-Man*, a flashback series that continued to show Busiek's rich understanding of Marvel history. Meanwhile, Busiek and artist Brent Anderson launched their award-winning series *Astro City*. When Marvel relaunched its core titles in 1997, Busiek took on *The Avengers* and *Iron Man*, as well as a brand-new series *Thunderbolts*, which shocked readers with its unexpected twists. Busiek also collaborated with writer Roger Stern and artist Carlos Pacheco on *Avengers Forever*, and with George Pérez on the decades-in-the-making *JLA/Avengers*. Busiek joined Dark Horse in 2003 for a long run on *Conan*, while at DC, he became regular writer on *Superman*, *Aquaman: Sword of Atlantis* and the weekly series *Trinity*. In 2009, he returned to Marvel for *Marvels: Eye of the Camera* with Jay Anacleto and 2021, he began a 12-issue run of *The Marvels* with Yildiray Çinar.

HECTOR COLLAZO

Hector Collazo attended the High School of Art and Design in New York City, then joined Marvel in an internship program. After a stint in Marvel's special projects department, where Collazo developed comics for promotional tie-ins, he began freelancing. His first credits were primarily for inking, but he also penciled a series of backup stories in the New Universe titles *Justice* and *Psi-Force*. The work Collazo became most known for was an extended run inking the pencils of Scott McDaniel in *Daredevil* and a 1995 *Elektra* limited series. He also penciled the one-shot *Age of Innocence: The Rebirth of Iron* Man. In addition to his Marvel work, Collazo picked up inking work at DC, with credits on *Hardware* and *Static* and a brief reunion with McDaniel on *Nightwing* and *Batman*. Collazo passed away in 2012 at the age of 45.

PETER DAVID

One of comics fandom's most beloved writers, Peter David has charted a path built around in-depth character study, humor and unwavering reliability. Born in 1956, David's father was a newspaper reporter and film reviewer for the *Newark Evening News*, giving his young son a front-row seat to what it took to be a professional writer. After earning a journalism degree

from New York University, David began a struggling career in newspaper writing. Meanwhile, he had also been writing science fiction stories as a hobby and eventually sold a story that was published in a 1980 issue of *Asimov's Science Fiction*. Quitting newspapers, he soon joined Marvel Comics in their sales department working under the innovative Carol Kalish. David had always wanted to write, however, and during his transition from sales to writing, he was offered a chance to start with the Spider-Man family of titles. It was on *The Spectacular Spider-Man* that David made his biggest impression, with a nearly three-year run that included the milestone "Death of Jean DeWolff." After helping launch the New Universe with *Mark Hazzard: Merc*, David began what would become one of the greatest runs of any creator on a Marvel title: A twelve-year stint writing *The Incredible Hulk* that ranks among the series' all-time best. It was on Peter David's *Hulk* that Todd McFarlane first became a superstar artist and David and collaborator Dale Keown later won an Eisner Award for Best Writer/Artist Team.

In 1987, David also picked up work with DC, writing a Green Lantern serial in *Action Comics Weekly* and enjoying a long stint on *Star Trek*. The following year, he took over the writing chores of Jim Starlin's *Dreadstar* for First Comics. In the early '90s, David started a critically-acclaimed tenure on *X-Factor* and created the future Spider-Man Miguel O'Hara in the million-selling debut of *Spider-Man 2099*. Other Marvel highlights included *Hulk: Future Imperfect* with George Pérez and the adventures of Genis-Vell in *Captain Marvel*. At DC, David scripted *The Atlantis Chronicles*, a seven-issue miniseries that charted the rise and fall of Aquaman's kingdom of Atlantis, and also kicked off a four-year run on *Aquaman*. Other titles he would write included *Supergirl*, *Young Justice* and *Fallen Angel.*

In the 2000s, David would return to helm an *X-Factor* revival, write *She-Hulk* and *Friendly Neighborhood Spider-Man* and collaborate with Stephen King on a comics adaptation of *The Dark Tower*. During his entire writing career, David has also worked extensively in mediums outside of comics. He has written several novels, including *Sir Apropos of Nothing*, the Arthurian fantasy novels *Knight Life* and *One Knight Only* and numerous movie novelizations and entertainment tie-ins, particularly in the Star Trek mythos. His popular comics industry column "But I Digress" has been collected in a pair of books, and he has written a well-received instruction book, *Writing for Comics with Peter David.*

JIM FERN

Artist Jim Fern began his career drawing background art for Mike Roy on Gold Key's *Buck Rogers in the 25th Century* and had his first solo art published in DC's *New Talent Showcase* while still a teenager. Fern soon graduated to penciling issues of several comics including *The Spectacular Spider-Man*, *The Transformers*, *Wolverine* and *X-Factor*. He also penciled a Stingray serial written by Len Wein in *Marvel Comics Presents* and stories in *The X-Men Annual* and *X-Factor Annual*. In 1990, Fern took on penciling *L.E.G.I.O.N. '90*, drew multiple issues of *Detective Comics* and illustrated "The Last Batman Story" in *Batman Annual* #15. He co-created *Scarlett* in 1991 and drew most of the vampire hunter's run. In 2002, Fern joined CrossGen to draw *Scion* and made a return to DC a year later to draw issues of *Aquaman*, *Birds of Prey* and a short run on *Green Lantern*. In 2006, Fern co-created the horror/fantasy series *Crossing Midnight* for DC's Vertigo imprint with writer Mike Carey. He also joined the stable of recurring artists for Bill Willingham's line of *Fables* titles and worked on two issues of *Convergence: World's Finest*.

JAMES FRY

A native of Brooklyn, New York, James Fry studied English literature at Dartmouth, after which he pursued a career as a freelance artist. He drew various stories for Marvel in the mid-'80s, including an issue of *The Amazing Spider-Man* and the cartoon adaptation *Inhumanoids*. Fry moved to DC where he took on *Star Trek*, penciling the movie adaptation of *Star Trek V: The Final Frontier* and the first eleven issues of DC's second ongoing *Star Trek* series. Returning to Marvel, Fry penciled a Werewolf by Night serial in *Marvel Comics Presents* and the limited series *Slapstick* and *Nomad* and had a turn as ongoing artist of *Marc Spector: Moon Knight*. In the late '90s, Fry began working with Archie Comics, where he became a regular artist on *Sonic the Hedgehog*. He has also applied his creative talents to production art for TV, film and animation.

PETER B. GILLIS

Peter B. Gillis (1952-2024) notched sustained runs on *Doctor Strange*, *Micronauts* and *The Defenders*, but it was the world of *Strikeforce: Morituri* that remains his most lasting contribution to comics. Starting in 1978, Gillis wrote fill-in issues of various Marvel titles, as well as periodic issues of *Captain America*, *Marvel Two-In-One* and *Super-Villain Team-Up*. He also contributed to several issues of *What If?,* with highlights including "What If Spider-Man Had Stopped the Burglar Who Killed His Uncle?" and "What If Hulk's Girlfriend Jarella Had Not Died?"

In 1983, Gillis began his association with independent comics publisher First Comics by adapting the Broadway sci-fi/comics fantasy play *Warp* with Frank Brunner. Next for First, Gillis wrote *Shatter*, the industry's first all-digitally produced comic done in collaboration with Mike Saenz. Meanwhile at Marvel, Gillis settled into a long run writing *The Defenders*, the 1984 relaunch of *Micronauts* and the first eight issues of an *Eternals* limited series. He began writing *Doctor Strange* in 1985, and hung with the series as it transferred to titles including *Strange Tales* and *Doctor Strange, Sorcerer Supreme.*

Gillis' most celebrated work, *Strikeforce: Morituri*, debuted in 1986. Drawn by Brent Anderson, it told the story of a cadre of soldiers granted super powers to fight off an alien invasion, though at the eventual cost of their own lives. Gillis wrapped up his comic-writing career in the late '80s and early '90s, writing *Tailgunner Jo* and *Gammarauders* for DC, and stories for Marvel anthologies *Marvel Comics Presents*, *Solo Avengers* and *What The?*

WALT JASCHEK

Born in 1955, St. Louis native Walt Jaschek grew up an avid reader of comics, a pastime that extended into his college days as

a student at the University of Missouri–St. Louis. While pursuing his communications degree, he edited the student newspaper *The Current*, taking the opportunity to interview comics luminaries such as Dennis O'Neil and Steve Gerber in the early stages of their respective careers. One of Jaschek's humor stories was published in *What The--?!* #5, illustrated by Jim Lee. After a long and distinguished career in copywriting, Jaschek was inducted into the St. Louis Media Hall of Fame. Now retired, he continues to pour his creativity into writing and film projects.

JIM LEE

Jim Lee was born in Seoul, South Korea, in 1964 and recalls from his earliest days being engrossed with Max Fleischer's *Superman* cartoons. When his family moved to America when he was 5, he began learning English through comic books. After graduating from Princeton with a degree in psychology, Lee made a fateful decision to temporarily forgo the career as a doctor his parents had hoped for and instead become a comic book artist, giving himself a year to succeed before returning to medical school. With a few months of arduous work at a drafting table and multiple rejections behind him, in 1987, Lee was recruited by Marvel after showing his samples at a convention. He spent his first year at Marvel penciling *Alpha Flight*, followed by finishing work on Carl Potts' *Punisher War Journal* and then full pencils on the title. By 1990, with the buzz around his work becoming greater and greater, Lee became the artist of Marvel's most popular title, *The Uncanny X-Men*, and the following year, he and Chris Claremont launched the record-selling new title *The X-Men*. In the summer of 1992, Lee joined with six of his peers to form Image Comics, an industry-disrupting company that focused on creator ownership, and launched his own imprint and studio, known as Wildstorm. Lee's projects at the time included *WildC.A.T.s*, *Stormwatch* and *Deathblow*. Wildstorm launched hit artists like J. Scott Campbell, published innovative series including *Planetary* and *The Authority* and became a welcome home to creator-owned properties. Lee returned to Marvel in 1996 with Rob Liefeld for Heroes Reborn, in which he took charge of the creative direction of *Iron Man* and *Fantastic Four*. In 1998, Lee sold Wildstorm and its properties to DC Comics. In 2002, he drew the blockbuster "Hush" arc in *Batman* and became DC's chief creative officer. Other high-profile projects have included "For Tomorrow" in *Superman*, *All Star Batman & Robin, the Boy Wonder* and *Justice League*. In 2010, Lee was named co-publisher of DC. He currently serves as president of DC Comics and remains one of the industry's most popular artists.

RICK LEONARDI

As soon as Rick Leonardi graduated from Dartmouth College in 1979, he sent Marvel and DC a self-written and -drawn comic book that spoke to his artistic potential. Marvel wrote back, encouraging him to take a job with them. In his first years in comics, Leonardi eased himself into the business with a handful of stories in *Thor* and *The Spectacular Spider-Man*. After proving himself, he landed a pair of higher-profile gigs with writer Bill Mantlo on the 1982 miniseries *The Vision and the Scarlet Witch* and *Cloak and Dagger*. After penciling issues of *The Amazing Spider-Man*—and being a part of the development of Spider-Man's new black costume with Mike Zeck—Leonardi reunited with Mantlo to launch an ongoing *Cloak and Dagger* series in 1985. He followed that up with Marvel's top-selling X-titles, drawing a Colossus serial in *Marvel Comics Presents* and several issues of *The Uncanny X-Men* and *The New Mutants*. In 1992, Leonardi and Peter David created Miguel O'Hara in *Spider-Man 2099*, a series Leonardi would draw for most of the first 25 issues of its run. In the late '90s, Leonardi drew the five-issue series *Painkiller Jane* for Joe Quesada and Jimmy Palmiotti's Event Comics, and in the 2000s, he would head to DC for stints with *Batgirl*, *Vigilante* and *Nightwing*. A longtime fan of Batman, Leonardi's most recent project is the ongoing series *Batman Beyond*.

ROB LIEFELD

Brash and outspoken, controversial and super popular, artist and creator Rob Liefeld rocketed to fame in the late '80s with his undeniably energetic figurework and go-for-broke attitude. Born and raised in Southern California, Liefeld grew up in the '70s obsessed with comics and drawing. He sent his artwork around to various publishers and the first one to take notice was the indie imprint Megaton. After that, it was a quick trip to the big leagues with DC, who hired him to pencil a Nightshade story in *Secret Origins*, an issue of *Warlord* and then a *Hawk & Dove* limited series. Marvel drafted him into their stable of hot young artists, where Liefeld first drew issues of *X-Factor*, *The Uncanny X-Men* and a *What If?* story featuring Wolverine. After drawing an *Amazing Spider-Man Annual* in 1989, Liefeld took on his first regular gig at Marvel with *New Mutants*. Liefeld swiftly introduced his time-traveling co-creation Cable and the now-global icon Deadpool and transformed the title into the paramilitary hit *X-Force*. In 1992, Liefeld and six of his artistic peers formed Image Comics, a move that rocked the comics industry and empowered Liefeld to write, draw and own his creations, including *Youngblood*, *Brigade* and *Supreme*. He joined Jim Lee in 1996 to reshape the core titles of the Marvel Universe in Heroes Reborn, with Liefeld handling the art chores on *Captain America*. In 1999, he began periodically contributing to series at both major publishers, writing and/or drawing issues of *Cable* and *Wolverine* and limited series devoted to *X-Force*, *Shatterstar* and *Major X*. Meanwhile at DC, Liefeld wrote and drew an eight-issue run of *Hawk & Dove* and contributed to *Deathstroke*, *Grifter* and *Savage Hawkman*. He also continued his Deadpool legacy, returning to his creation in *Deadpool Corps*, *Deadpool: Bad Blood* and its 2023 sequel *Badder Blood*.

MIKE MIGNOLA

Influenced by everything from Jack Kirby and classic monsters to the gothic stylings of the Victorian era, Mike Mignola has built an enduring legacy on an unmistakable art style and his creation, Hellboy. Born in Berkeley, California, in 1960, Mignola was drawn into the world of monsters after reading Bram Stoker's *Dracula* at the age of 13. His first published work was spot illustrations and cover art for the fanzine *The Comic Reader*. By his early 20s, after receiving a BFA in illustration from the California College of the Arts, he had developed his artistry sufficiently enough to brave a move to New York City and soon found work with Marvel. He spent the first five years of his professional career there, first inking titles like *Master of Kung Fu* and *Power Man and Iron Fist*, then collaborating with

writer Bill Mantlo on the cult hit limited series, *Rocket Raccoon*. He also penciled short but memorable runs on *Incredible Hulk* and *Alpha Flight*, while also drawing issues of *Solomon Kane*, *Cloak and Dagger* and *Amazing High Adventure*. In 1986, Mignola penciled *Michael Moorcock's Chronicles of Corum* for First Comics, then moved to DC to pencil the limited series *World of Krypton* and *Phantom Stranger* as well as the prestige-format series *Cosmic Odyssey*. In 1989, he drew his first Batman story, the DC Elseworlds graphic novel *Gotham by Gaslight*, and collaborated with Roger Stern on the graphic novel *Doctor Strange/Doctor Doom: Triumph and Torment*. Another milestone for Mignola was the four-issue limited series *Fafhrd and the Gray Mouser*, written by Howard Chaykin with Al Williamson inking his pencils. In 1992, he illustrated a four-issue miniseries adapted by Roy Thomas of the movie *Bram Stoker's Dracula*, published by Topps Comics. In 1993, Mignola's career took a decisive turn when he joined Dark Horse to publish his creator-owned Hellboy. The occult detective's hulking demonic features grabbed the attention of readers, and it became a bona fide hit, leading to spin-offs including *B.P.R.D.*, *Abe Sapien* and *Lobster Johnson*. In the years since Hellboy soared to popularity, Mignola has been the recipient of several Eisner, Harvey and other industry awards for his work. *Hellboy* was later adapted into a 2004 film directed by Guillermo Del Toro that spawned several follow-up films and made Mignola's character a household name. Outside of comics, Mignola worked as a production designer on *Atlantis: The Lost Empire* and visual consultant on *Blade II* and the *Hellboy* films.

AL MILGROM

Though arguably his highest profile in comics came as the fan-favorite editor of *Marvel Fanfare*, Al Milgrom has made significant contributions as a penciler, inker and writer over his four decades in the industry. Al came up in the '70s both assisting the legendary artist Murphy Anderson and later serving as one of Neal Adams' Crusty Bunkers art squad, in the meantime having his early work published at Charlton Comics, Atlas/Seaboard, Warren and the indie sci-fi anthology *Star*Reach*. His first major inroads in the industry occurred with Marvel, where he followed up Jim Starlin for a long run drawing *Captain Marvel*. Continuing with the sci-fi themes of his seminal creative efforts, he also drew the ongoing adventures of the Guardians of the Galaxy in *Marvel Presents*. At DC, he would develop Firestorm with Gerry Conway. In 1982, Marvel launched the anthology title *Marvel Fanfare*, which often featured Milgrom's editorial notes in cartoon form under the moniker "Editori-Al." While editing that long-running series, Milgrom also had ongoing stints penciling *The Avengers* and *West Coast Avengers* and drew the notable miniseries *Secret Wars II* and *Kitty Pryde & Wolverine*. He also scripted *Spectacular Spider-Man* and *Incredible Hulk*. Since the '90s, Milgrom has spent most of his time inking, with an impressive nine-year run on *X-Factor* and work for Archie amongst his many credits.

ANN NOCENTI

Ann Nocenti's role as editor and writer at Marvel in the '80s marked her as one of the company's most influential creators of the decade. Titles under her stewardship as editor included *The Incredible Hulk*, *ROM* and *Star Wars*, but it was the X-Men universe titles that were Nocenti's main focus. She edited *The Uncanny X-Men* during the era that encompassed the classic tenure of artist John Romita Jr., iconic stories by Barry Windsor-Smith and the "Mutant Massacre" and "Fall of the Mutants" events, all in collaboration with writer Chris Claremont. Nocenti also edited *New Mutants*, *X-Men and Alpha Flight*, *Kitty Pryde and Wolverine* and *Firestar*. But it was writing that she most wanted to pursue.

Her first series work was writing the final four issues of *Spider-Woman*, and she scripted the Dazzler/Beast team-up miniseries *Beauty and the Beast*. It was her next title that would elevate her to new heights in the industry: The 1985 miniseries *Longshot*, done in collaboration with then-unknown artist Arthur Adams, introduced the dimension-jumping Longshot and his media-manipulating archfoe Mojo. Next up for Nocenti was a pair of *Web of Spider-Man* annuals and an acclaimed four-and-a-half-year run on *Daredevil*. Paired with artists John Romita Jr. and Lee Weeks, Nocenti's *Daredevil* balanced the vigilante lawyer's quest for social justice with his battles against super villains and featured the debut of Typhoid Mary. Nocenti went to Vertigo to scribe *Kid Eternity* but continued to work at Marvel through much of the '90s until she left comics for journalism and film. She returned to comics in the 2010s, when she scripted series such as DC's *Green Arrow*, *Katana* and *Catwoman*.

MIKE VOSBURG

As a comics-loving kid, Mike Vosburg never dreamed that one day he would be working in the industry, but after many of his friends began to get work in the field he decided to give it a shot himself. After graduating college and getting his feet wet in underground comics, he got his first professional jobs with Gold Key and Charlton, and by the mid-1970s he was drawing for both Marvel and DC. For Marvel, he illustrated several of Doug Moench's Shang-Chi stories in *Deadly Hands of Kung Fu*, and drew the first appearance of the monster-hunting Ulysses Bloodstone in *Marvel Presents*. His knack for drawing beautiful women garnered him jobs on *Ms. Marvel*, Tigra in *Marvel Premiere*, and almost the entire run of *Savage She-Hulk*, as well as *Isis* and *Starfire* for DC. While drawing an extended run of *G.I. Joe: A Real American Hero*, Vosburg transitioned his talents to animation, doing storyboards for the G.I. Joe cartoon series, and *G.I. Joe: The Movie*. His other animation credits include concept and storyboard art for *Jem and the Holograms*, *Captain Planet*, and *Avengers: Earth's Mightiest Heroes*, and an Emmy Award-winning turn on *Spawn*. Vosburg also illustrated the comic book covers that appeared in the opening of each episode of HBO's *Tales From the Crypt*. Despite all his work in Hollywood, Vosburg never completely left comics. His credits from the '80s and '90s include Epic Comics' *Sisterhood of Steel*, runs on Marvel's *The Mutant Misadventures of Cloak and Dagger*, Valiant's *Bloodshot*, and his self-published series *Lori Lovecraft*.

Biographies researched and written by John Rhett Thomas

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BE A SHAME IF SOMETHING BAD HAPPENS TO MY NICE NEW JACKET!

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MARVEL
ENTER... THE MASTER MOLD!

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NOW ON SALE TWICE A MONTH!

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NOW ON SALE TWICE A MONTH!

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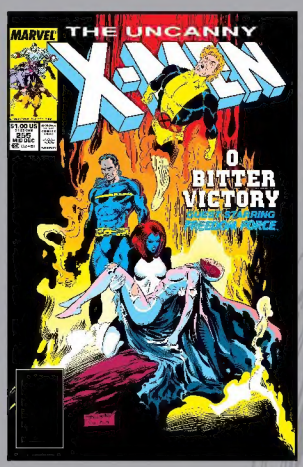
TO SAVE THE DREAM...
A NEW LEGEND IS BORN!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